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# **The Black Regime at Dharasana**

[ A brief Survey of the 'Dharasana Raid' ]

*"Hear diligently my speech, and my  
declaration with your ears.*

*Behold now, I have ordered my cause;  
I know that I shall be justified."*

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## **Panditji's Blessings**

The following is an extract from a letter from Pandit Motilal Nehru the acting President of the Indian National Congress, addressed to Gujarat Provincial Congress Committee.

“I am very glad to learn how bravely our volunteers had stood the fierce and barbarous onslaughts of the police without flinching. The doings at Dharasana will live in history to the ever-lasting glory of our men and equally ever-lasting shame of the authorities. Please convey to the men my keen appreciation of their courage and self-sacrifice which is the admiration of all India to-day.

“I notice that Sjt. Ambalal Patel who succeeded Sjt. Narahari Parikh and the whole batch accompanying Mr. Ranchhodlal and Muniji have also been arrested. I have no doubt that as the leaders of batches are arrested other volunteers will step in to their places and continue to offer as stubborn a resistance as their predecessors have done.”



## Publishers' Note

A history of the Dharasana Campaign or a critical study of the same should be reserved for a future historian. The task requires the tried pen of a Mahadev Desai. Here is an attempt made to present a brief survey of the campaign as was seen by an eye-witness from day to day. Any exaggeration is scrupulously avoided and statements of the victims of Government's lawless regime—more appropriately described by Bapu as *Goondaraj* at Dharasana, are given here as they were recorded. But more weighty are the opinions by impartial and unbiassed public men who are credited with level-headedness and whose integrity of purpose, it would be a venture even for Government die-hards to question. These opinions and statements speak for themselves. They expose the black regime in its entire nakedness, and those who have either witnessed the atrocities described being perpetrated on non-violent Satyagrahis or heard or read about them must surely have been convinced of the urgency of ending the system of Government under which these gruesome deeds become possible.



21st May is a memorable day in the history of the present struggle and it is in the fitness of things that Gujarat should celebrate the day on which was given the noblest and most magnificent sacrifice—a nobler and more magnificent sacrifice could not be conceived—on the battlefield of Dharasana. It is equally appropriate that such a compilation—as we call it—is presented to Gujarat on this memorable occasion.

The survey has been prepared very hastily and no one should expect in it the thoroughness of a well-planned book. This survey is solely meant to show to what depth of depravity, an alien Government, bent upon keeping its sway over a deliberately disarmed and emasculated nation, can go. The compilers will be amply rewarded if this object is served.

21-6-'30

Dharasana Day

# The Sacrifice at Dharasana

## Deaths caused by beating

	Date	Native Place
Bhailal Dajibhai Patel	22-5-30	Palaj, Kheda
Bhan Khepu Hulla	10-6-30	Sholapur
Narottam Nathubhai Patel	13-6-30	Surat
Harilal Shah	15-5-30	Bombay

## Imprisonments

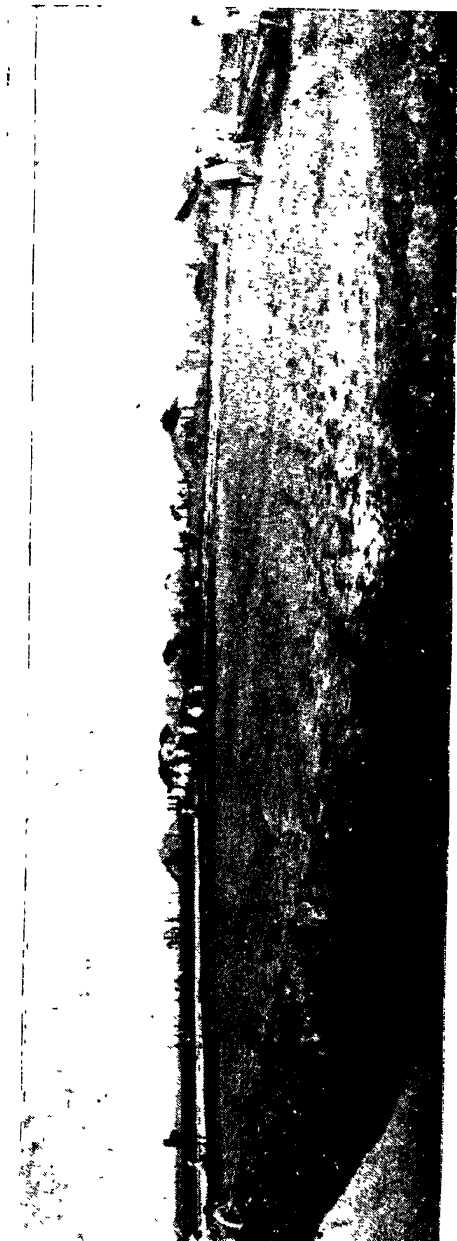
Name	Date	Term
Gandhiji	5-5-30	Indefinite
Abbas Taiyabjee	12-5-30	6 months S. I.
Jugatram Dave	"	6 " R. I.
54 of Gandhiji's batch	"	3 " "
Sarojini Devi	26-5-30	9 " S. I.
Imam Saheb	"	6 " "
Pyarelalji	"	12 " R. I.
Manilal Gandhi	"	12 " "
Seth Ranchhodlal	"	12 " "
Muni Jinviyaji	"	5½ " "
40 Volunteers	"	3 " "
3 Volunteers	"	6 " "
20 Volunteers	"	1 month "
Sorab Batliwala	27-5-30	9 months R. I.
8 Volunteers	"	9 " "
16 Volunteers	"	6 " "
Narhari Parikh	29-5-30	12 " "
Dr. Tribhuvandas	"	6 " "
Ambalal Patel	"	6 " "
171 Volunteers	"	1 month "
Balwantrao Thakore	30-5-30	6 months S. I.
Vajubhai Shukla	"	12 " R. I.
Puratan Buch	"	12 " "

# **List of the wounded      Volunteers sent on the field**

Date	Number	Date	Number
16-5-30	15	15 to 20-5-30	300
21-5-30	741	21-5-30	1,570
22-5-30	150	29-5-30	75
29-5-30	15	30-5-30	111
30-5-30	56	31-5-30	165
31-5-30	115	1-6-30	162
1-6-30	111	3-6-30	162
3-6-30	58	6-6-30	154
5-6-30	72		—
	<hr/>		2,699

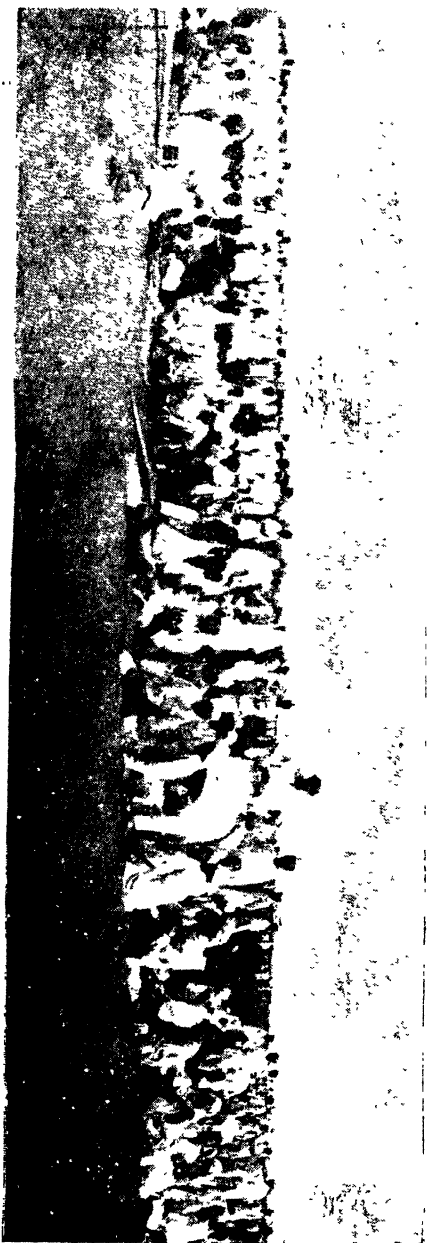
Total 1,333

2,699—59 (counted twice) = 2,640



Birds' Eye-view of Phinasea. Sub Work

The Result of Government's Death—'ance at Phra ana.



Hundreds lying wounded on field on 21st May

## **Introduction**

*Any people anywhere being inclined and having the power, have the right to rise up and shake of existing Government which they deem unjust and tyrannical, and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, a most sacred right, a right which we hope, and believe is to liberate the world.*

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

### **1. A Brief Historical Survey**

For several years the idea of 'Home Rule' was possessing the minds of Indian leaders. They had but vague notions of what was needed. They were clear that time had arrived when some kind of self-government had to be granted to India. It was at the Madras Congress that Swaraj was definitely stated to be India's goal, and was included in the constitution of that body. The method by which that end was to be attained was to be 'peaceful and legitimate.' Even then many were not clear as to what 'Swaraj' connoted. In 1928 at the Calcutta Congress more definite meaning

was attached to the word 'Swaraj' as signifying 'Dominion Status' within the Empire if possible or Independence without if necessary. A period of twelve months was given to the Government to take what steps were necessary to attain this goal. If nothing was done by December 1927 it was decided that the next Congress should clarify the meaning of 'Swaraj' further into 'attainment of Complete Independence' and severance of British connection. The Government through the Viceroy declared that Dominion Status was India's goal but were not willing to state definitely the period when that was to be attained. Gandhiji asked for signs of real change of heart and when these were not forthcoming it left no alternative to the National Congress that met at Lahore in December 1929 but to pass a resolution in accordance with the resolution of Calcutta Congress declaring immediate attainment of Independence as its goal.

## **II. Civil Disobedience Programme**

The ways and means of carrying out this object was left to the A. I. C. C. the Working Committee of which body met at Sabarmati Ashram in February 1930 when Gandhiji laid before it what he considered was the best plan to obtain Independence. It was decided to break such laws as were immoral and anti-social and which would not be kept on the Statute Book of an Independent India. The iniquitous impost on salt which has been the target of Indian politicians for decades was chosen by Gandhiji as a disgrace on the

Statute Book to be effaced and a gross injustice to be remedied. The Congress appointed Gandhiji as the Generalissimo of the civil disobedience campaign to be launched.

At this stage we are reminded of another talented nation that was under a similar economic bondage to the Egyptians 3,500 years ago. The Pharaoh repeatedly promised to let the Children of Israel go to the wilderness to worship their God, but again and again he hardened his heart. In the same way our Pharaohs have time and again promised us, at periods of great distress to them, larger measures of reform, but no sooner were the plagues withdrawn than their hearts were hardened again and they have only increased the burden of taxation upon us. Our deliverer proved to be a shrewder man than Moses and rather than be fooled again he asked for an earnest in the form of the following eleven reforms :

1. Total prohibition,
2. Reduction of the ratio to 1 s. 4 d.,
3. Reduction of the land revenue to at least 50<sup>0</sup>/<sub>100</sub> and making it subject to legislative control,
4. Abolition of the salt tax,
5. Reduction of the military expenditure to at least 50<sup>0</sup>/<sub>100</sub> to begin with,
6. Reduction of the salaries of the higher grade service to one half or less so as to suit the reduced revenue,
7. Protective tariff on foreign cloth,
8. The passage of the Coastal Traffic Reservation Bill



9. Discharge of all political prisoners save those condemned for murder or the attempt thereof by the ordinary judicial tribunal, withdrawal of all political prosecutions, abrogation of Section 124 A, the Regulation of 1818 and the like, and permission to all the Indian exiles to return.

10. Abolition of C. I. D. or its popular control,

11. Issue of licenses to use fire arms for self-defence subject to popular control.

The Government was in no mood to accede to these requests.

### **III. The Salt Campaign**

Having previously received full powers from the Congress, Gandhiji addressed a letter to the Viceroy explaining the popular view regarding the Government and the grievances of the people and entreating him to redress the wrongs. His appeal met with scant courtesy, and he was obliged to inaugurate his campaign of civil disobedience.

As regards salt monopoly Gandhiji writes:

"There is no article like salt outside water by taxing which the State can reach even the starving millions, the sick, the maimed and the utterly helpless. The tax constitutes therefore the most inhuman poll tax that ingenuity of man can devise. The wholesale price per maund of 82 lbs. is according to Government publications as low as 10 pies, and the tax, say, twenty annas, *i. e.*, 240 pies. This means 2,400 per cent. on sale price! What this means to the poor can hardly be imagined by us. Salt production like cotton growing has been

centralised for the sake of sustaining the inhuman monopoly. The necessary consequence of the wilful destruction of the spinning wheel was destruction of cottage cultivation of cotton. The necessary consequence of salt monopoly was the destruction, *i. e.*, closing down of salt works in thousands of places where the poor people manufactured their own salt. A correspondent writes to me from Konkan, saying that if the people had freedom, they could pick up salt from the deposits made by the receding tides on the bountiful coast. But he sorrowfully adds that officers turn the salt over into the sea as fast as nature deposits it. He adds however, that those who can successfully evade the salt police do help themselves to this sea salt. Gujarat workers report the existence of many places where, but for the prohibition, people can get their salt as easily as they can dig out earth for many household purposes. Bengal free can today manufacture all the salt she can ever need. And yet she is forced to import all the salt she eats."

To a correspondent who felt taking salt from the pans was illegal Gandhiji replies :

"Both the helping from pans and manufacturing contraband salt are statutory crimes heavily punishable. Why is the manufacturing without licence a virtue and taking salt from a manufacturing pan a vice ? If the impost is wrong, it is wrong whether in connection with manufactured salt or the crude article. If a robber steals my grain and cooks some of it, I am entitled to both the raw and the cooked grain. I may draw a distinction for

the sake of avoiding inconvenience between manufactured and crude salt, and adopt the easier method of manufacturing salt. But that does not alter the legal position in the slightest degree. When therefore the time comes, civil resisters will have an ample opportunity of their ability to conduct their campaign regarding the tax in a most effective manner. The illegality is in a Government that steals the peoples salt and makes them pay heavily for the stolen article. The people, when they become conscious of their power, will have every right to take possession of what belongs to them."

Sjt J. C. Kumarappa writes in 'Young India' "The Salt Tax is the worst blot on our revenue system. In a vegetarian country like ours a greater amount of salt is needed in the diet, and in a tropical country a greater quantity is used in the household for preserving various articles from putrefying. What" is more, the poorer people whose menu varies very little from day to day require a good deal more than the upper and the middle classes. We know that the rest of our tax system bears heavily on the poor, and this is the last straw to break the camel's back. If the people had all they needed, the consumption of salt should be inelastic, but the wide variation in demand with every change in duty imposed clearly indicates that the tax makes the people stint on this most essential article of diet. In India a tax on salt is almost as bad as a tax on good drinking water. This tax itself is highly regressive both actually and relatively. The poorer

the citizen the more he pays, and a larger share of his income taken than from the richer man. In the sober words of the Taxation Enquiry Committee, "it falls on a necessary of life, and to the extent that salt is essential for physical existence, it is in the nature of a poll tax. The bulk of it is paid by those who are least able to contribute anything towards the State expenditure. Salt is also required for various industrial and agricultural operations and for cattle. Unless it is issued free for these purposes, some burden is thrown upon the industries in which it is used." Even a meat eating country like England abolished the duty on salt over a hundred years ago. Japan which received a revenue of about 10 million yen from the salt monopoly abolished it in 1919 in consideration of 'social policies;' it is ordinarily sold there now at almost cost and for agriculture, fisheries etc. at even below cost."

Mr. J. Ramsay Macdonald says, "Salt Tax is an exaction and oppression and if the people understood it, it would only lead to discontent."

Thus finding in the Salt Tax an excellent means of breaking down a Government, half slave and half free, Gandhiji proceeded to lay his plans of attack. "With malice towards none; with charity for all, with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right" he strove to finish the work he had undertaken "to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

#### IV The March for Liberty

Having definitely made up his mind he started on the 12th March with his face towards Dandi a sea-side village about 180 miles from the Ashram with a noble band of 79 volunteers, vowed to non-violence and truth. All along the route, wherever the party halted there were thousands and thousands of people from all the surrounding villages gathered together to pay their respects to the Mahatma. This gave the Generalissimo his chance for mobilising his forces. By the time he reached Dandi he had addressed hundreds of thousands of people and explained to them the plan of operations and the rules they should follow as Satyagrahis in carrying out the programme. The people were to suffer to death and all the legitimate penalties but were not to lift their little finger, in self-defence. They were to remain non-violent whatever may happen. The following is a summary of the explanations given in Gandhiji's own words:-

"Satyagraha literally means insistence on truth. This insistence arms the votary with matchless power. This power or force is connoted by the word Satyagraha. Satyagraha, to be genuine, may be offered against parents, against one's wife or one's children, against rulers, against, fellow citizens, even against the whole world.

"Such a universal force necessarily makes no distinction between kinsmen and strangers, young and old, man and woman, friend and foe. The force to be so applied can never be physical. There is

in it no room for violence. The only force of universal application can, therefore, be that of *ahimsa* or love. In other words it is soul force.

“Love does not burn others, it burns itself. Therefore, a Satyagrahi, *i. e.*, a civil resister will joyfully suffer even unto death.

“It follows, therefore, that a civil resister, whilst he will strain every nerve to compass the end of the existing rule, will do no intentional injury in thought, word or deed to the person of a single Englishman. This necessarily brief explanation of Satyagraha will perhaps enable the reader to understand and appreciate the following rules:

### **As an Individual**

1. A Satyagrahi, *i. e.*, a civil resister will harbour no anger.

2. He will suffer the anger of the opponent.

3. In so doing he will put up with assaults from the opponent, never retaliate; but he will not submit, out of fear of punishment or the like, to any order given in anger.

4. When any person in authority seeks to arrest a civil resister, he will voluntarily submit to the arrest, and he will not resist the attachment or removal of his own property, if any, when it is sought to be confiscated by authorities.

5. If a civil resister has any property in his possession as a trustee, he will refuse to surrender it, even though in defending it he might lose his life. He will, however, never retaliate.

6. Non-retaliation excludes swearing and cursing.

7. Therefore a civil resister will never insult his opponent, and therefore also not take part in many of the newly coined cries which are contrary to the spirit of *ahimsa*.

8. A civil resister will not salute the Union Jack, nor will he insult it or officials, English or Indian.

9. In the course of the struggle if any one insults an official or commits an assault upon him, a civil resister will protect such official or officials from the insult or attack even at the risk of his life.

### **As a Prisoner**

10. As a prisoner, a civil resister, will behave courteously toward prison officials, and will observe all such discipline of the prison as is not contrary to self-respect; as for instance, whilst he will *Salam* officials in the usual manner, he will not perform any humiliating gyrations and refuse to shout Victory to Sarker ' or the like. He will take cleanly cooked and cleanly served food, which is not contrary to his religion, and will refuse to take food insultingly served or served in unclean vessels.

11. A civil resister will make no distinction between an ordinary prisoner and himself, will in no way regard himself as superior to the rest, nor will he ask for any conveniences that may not be necessary for keeping his body in good health and condition. He is entitled to ask for such conveniences as may be required for his physical or spiritual well-being.

12. A civil resister may not fast for want of conveniences whose deprivation does not involve any injury to one's self-respect.

### **As a Unit**

13. A civil resister will joyfully obey all the orders issued by the leader of the corps, whether they please him or not.

14. He will carry out orders in the first instance even though they appear to him insulting, inimical or foolish, and then appeal to higher authority. He is free before joining to determine the fitness of the corps to satisfy him, but after he has joined it, it becomes a duty to submit to its discipline irksome or otherwise. If the sum total of the energy of the corps appears to a member to be improper or immoral, he has a right to sever his connection, but being within it, he has no right to commit a breach of its discipline.

15. No civil resister is to expect maintenance for his dependents. It would be an accident if any such provision is made. A civil resister entrusts his dependents to the care of God. Even in ordinary warfare wherein hundreds of thousands give themselves up to it, they are able to make no previous provision. How much more, then, should such be the case in Satyagraha ? It is the universal experience that in such times hardly anybody is left to starve.

### **In Communal Fights**

16. No civil resister will intentionally become a cause of communal quarrels.



17. In the event of any such outbreak, he will not take sides, but he will assist only that party which is demonstrably in the right. Being a Hindu he will be generous towards Musalmans and others, and will sacrifice himself in the attempt to save non-Hindus from a Hindu attack. And if the attack is from the other side, he will not participate in any retaliation but will give his life in protecting Hindus.

18. He will, to the best of his ability, avoid every occasion that may give rise to communal quarrels.

19. If there is a procession of Satyagrahis they will do nothing that would wound the religious susceptibilities of any community, and they will not take part in any other processions that are likely to wound such susceptibilities."

### **V The Campaign Launched,**

Gandhiji and party reached Dandi, as scheduled, on 5th April. For several years past the week beginning with 6th April has been observed as the National Week in India and it was thought fitting that a campaign for Independence should be launched during that week. Accordingly Gandhiji broke the Salt Laws at Dandi on that day and gave the word for all India to follow. The movement spread like prairie fire all over the land and people took it up with great enthusiasm.

At this stage the law breaking was confined to picking up natural deposits of salt and refining it.

If the Government had followed strict legal procedure they would have had to imprison

hundreds of thousands of persons. To avoid this awkward measure they resorted to lawlessness by assaulting people with sticks and arresting the leaders. They imagined that the *lathis* will frighten away the villagers. In this they were totally mistaken. They had not reckoned with the genius of the people for endurance and patience in attaining their goal.

When the police attempted to forcibly take away the salt collected from the hands of the Satyagrahis at the village of Aat Gandhiji called that a "Barbarous" method of dealing with civil resisters. From this to the rendering of Satyagrahis unconscious by squeezing their privates, as was practised at Viramgam, was but an easy step. This violation of the body roused the indignation of the people. Gandhiji wrote on the 24th April:—

"If the Government do not stop this brutal violation of the body, they will find the Satyagrahis presently compelling them to use the guns against them. I do not want this to happen. But if the Government will have it, I should have no hesitation whatsoever in giving them the opportunity. They must not physically interfere with the bands of civil resisters manufacturing salt, they may arrest every man, woman and child if they wish. If they will neither arrest, nor declare salt free, they will find people marching to be shot rather than be tortured.

It is true that the barbarous interference with the body and the indecent assaults are a heritage of

the past. This Government has by its tacit approval given it a currency which it never had before."

In his second letter to the Viceroy, which was published immediately after his incarceration, he made clear his purpose in contemplating a "raid" on Dharasana.

## **VI " Raids "**

As the protest against these barbarous methods and indecent assaults fell on deaf ears it was resolved to give the Government the chance of shooting down unarmed crowds by organising " raids " on Salt Depots. It was felt shooting was any day more humane when compared with violation of the persons and tortures meted out at various places. It was with this purpose of exhibiting to the world the long concealed fangs of the Bureaucracy that the " raids " on Dharasana were decided upon. Before the Generalissimo could lead the first "raid" he was placed behind stone walls and iron bars. Already the campaign had assumed the proportions of a mass movement and the taking away of the leaders only fanned the fire and increased the intensity several fold. With great enthusiasm the plan laid out by Gandhiji was carried to fruition by ex-judge Abbas Tyabji and others.

Rather than shoot down these brave men who came unarmed to face all the mechanical might of the British Empire the authorities preferred to embark on a programme of tortures, as the former course would have precipitated a world conflagration.

At the time, the London Naval Conference was in session and there was little love lost between the parties and even now an excuse will be eagerly seized by the armed nations of the west to crush their competitors in economic exploitation. In 1914 it was "the rights of small nations", in 1930 it might well be "the firing on unarmed people" and rather than run such grave risks the Britishers chose to torture the people and hush up the news from reaching the ears of the world by Press Ordinances and Secret Censorship. Let the victims of Dharasana or other parts remember that by their wounds and suffering they are stemming the tide of violence from spreading all over the world. They have been bearing the brunt of the battle for liberating, not only India but humanity itself from the rule of violence. This knowledge of greater service will go to increase their joy in suffering for others.

Dharasana became a veritable inferno. The story of the atrocities inflicted on non-violent people by a blood-thirsty and enraged Government which had taken leave of all pretences of "Law and order" and had run amuck in its anxiety to suppress the wakened consciousness of the nation which it has been exploiting for generations is vividly told in subsequent pages.

## **VII In the Balances**

These atrocities are viewed by us with the gravest misgivings while the Britishers make light of it and compare their doings with the happenings

during the world war and pat themselves on the back and say "God! we thank thee; we are not as the other men are." True, they are not as the other men are as they have proved themselves to be 'subhumans' actually. In trying gauge the black deeds we have to take into consideration the level of both the parties to the struggle. If both are armed they are on a par. If there is grave provocation then the sins are not so blame-worthy. A thing may be done in the heat of the moment which would be repented at leisure. This is the criterion that allows of murders being pardoned in France. We scan the pages of history almost in vain to find parallels to what has been happening in our land. In the middle ages the Moslems carried with them the alternative of the Koran or the sword. However much we may condemn their method their ideal was noble—to bring into the folds of the true faith erring nations. Paul believed he was doing God service when he was a consenting party to stone to death Stephen. The Inquisitions of the "Catholic" Church were much on the same level. There was always the mistaken ideal which will procure for them pardon in God's judgment who looketh to the heart rather than to the action itself. The world war was between nations armed the teeth and therefore were on a par. and the atrocities were committed by both sides under the heat of the moment by uneducated soldiers and not by civilians from the best of British universities. If we turn to the lynchings in America the

victim lacks the purity of the Christian martyrs and the oppressors lack the nobility of the ideals of the religious persecutors. If we turn to the atrocious deeds of King Leopold in the Belgian Congo there we see the same greed of gold in the oppressors as in the British, but the ideals of suffering for a noble cause were absent in the victims. What we have witnessed here is of a more degrading type than any of these. The range of difference in the parties is of the widest. On the one hand we have the high idealism of the Christian martyrs and on the other a selfish greed of gain. In this we find the closest parallel in the happenings in Palestine two thousand years ago. Jesus on the one side with the ideal of self-suffering and Pharisees on the other seeking to hound Him out to serve their own end! We have scratched the sheepskins of our rulers and have discovered to our horror live wolves in all their native ferocity. Judging from this criterion if all that is written about German atrocities were true they would still have the claim to be reckoned human beings while the Britishers by torturing for wealth inoffensive people who had no selfish motives in submitting themselves to these inhumanities have renounced all claims to be considered national creatures and have exhibited the cloven hoofs which declare their place of origin to be the nether regions.

### **VIII Conclusion**

These disclosures urge us as nothing else has done before to exorcise our land of these inhabitants of the lower world at the earliest

possible moment. The people have been awakened from their slumber and the desperate efforts of our pharaoh only seems to goad the people on to press forward, come what may. Ordinances and tortures are but arguments to gird up our loins and steel our hearts to meet whatever unknown horrors there may be in store for us. Dharasana has dealt the death blow to the British Empire in India and the monster bids fair to lash the ocean red with innocent blood before it is laid low. We are prepared to bide our time to see the "Pharaoh" down to the police sergeants walking down with their portmanteaus to the Ballard Pier to catch the next boat "home". When that time comes we shall extend a hearty invitation to all foreigners, even such to Britishers as have been instrumental in oppressing us in their shortsightedness who are willing to serve the country, to stay with us and accept such protection as India can afford to give but none shall stay in our land by virtue of his "might". May God in His mercy shorten the days of our affliction and speedily bring us the day of salvation:

"Remember, O Lord, what is come upon us.

Our inheritance is turned to strangers  
and our houses to aliens.

We have drunken our water for money;  
our wood is sold unto us.

Our necks are under persecution;  
we labour and have no rest.

Servants have ruled over us.

Princes are hanged by their hands; the  
faces of elders were not honoured.

Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we  
shall be turned; renew our days  
as of old. ”

Our days will be more than the days of old if we persist, as we have done so far, on the non-violent path to freedom. Dharasana has declared to the world that in spite of the gravest provocations and repeated attempts at driving the volunteers to violence the youth of Gujarat have picked up the gauntlets and have remained non-violent. If the spirit of Dharasana spreads over India there will be no more disarmament conferences necessary, and the mightiest of dreadnoughts will not sell for scrap iron. Let us pray that day is not far off.





## **The Dharasana Raid**

The memorable march which Gandhiji undertook on Wednesday the 12th of March, 1930 in order to wage the salt campaign did not in fact terminate at Dandi on the 5th day of April. The inhuman atrocities which the Government had begun to hurl against the salt satyagrahis all over the country in order to crush the fight had stirred the indignation of Gandhiji to the very depth of his heart. Whereupon he determined to satisfy the Government's thirst for blood by giving them a full sacrifice of human heads. One can clearly see his intention expressed in the following extracts taken from his speech at the little village of Chharwada where he saw for the first time the Government salt Depot:-

### **The Envidable Title of Salt-robber**

"I like the title which the people have given me of salt-robber instead of Mahatma. But it is not easy to become a salt-robber, Mahatmaship is easy enough. If one puts on a loin cloth and pretends observing some fads about

food, one can easily get the title of a Mahatma in this country. But the title of salt-robber is not so easy to earn. It would be only an insignificant incident when we shall all take salt presently from the neighbouring ditch. Sarkar Ma-bap have mixed up all the salt with mud so we shall not get it quite clean, yet we shall have it in whatever form we can get it. But when can we really be called robbers? Only when we are awarded the punishment for robbery. Who will call it robbery if no one summons us to answer the charge of having committed it? In the law of the Government, taking dust from the road may well be regarded theft but neither the people nor the Government consider it as such. It will be regarded real robbery only when we get our hands broken in the act. We shall indeed take salt to day, but in all probability our hands will not be broken.

“Real robbery will consist only in plundering yonder heaps of salt.                      heaps appeared attractive from a distance at Untadi; to-day when I have a closer view, they appear dirty and repellent. But whatever may be the case, we shall be real robbers when we get our hands or wrists broken or ourselves thrown into prisons for laying our hands on those salt heaps.

“Call me salt-robber only when we take possession of the Dharasana salt works. What does it matter if we take a pound or two of salt from nooks and corners? The government must also be taking it as a mere child's play. “If you want to play the real game, come and plunder the salt works at Dharasana or Bhaindar or Kharaghoda,” the Government might be boasting in its mind. I confess ours is a child's play for the present, but some day our

play is sure to develop into a serious game. All of you, residents of Chharwada and Dharasana, do us in the game. Not now, but when the time comes, I will invite you all. What will the people of the villages in the neighbourhood of Dharasana say to the future historian about their share in the game? Will you tell him that you fled away or that you stood bravely in the front? We shall not be angry with those, neither shall we abuse them who put out the lights and belaboured the people. We want to impart justice quite in a different manner. Do you remember the popular adage, "give an inch and they take a foot?" If they take our finger, we shall also offer our hand, if they take our hand we shall offer our shoulders, and if they devour it we shall be prepared to sacrifice our necks. They have begun to beat and be labour our volunteers: now let us so arrange the game as to invite all the beating on our heads."

This intention of Gandhiji was every day growing more and more firm and on the 4th of May he finished his second letter to the Viceroy in which he announced his intention of raiding the Dharasana salt works. The following extracts from his historic letter will make it clear.

Dear Friend,

God willing, it is my intention on . . . to set out for Dharasana and reach there with my companions on . . . and demand possession of the Salt Works. The public have been told that Dharasana is private property. This is mere camouflage. It is as effectively under Government control as the Viceroy's House. Not a pinch of salt can be removed without the previous sanction of the authorities.

It is possible for you to prevent this raid, as it has been playfully and mischievously called, in three ways :

1. by removing the salt tax;
2. by arresting me and my party unless the country can, as I hope it will, replace every one taken away;
3. by sheer *goondaism* unless every head broken is replaced, as I hope, it will.

It is not without hesitation that the step has been decided upon. I had hoped that the Government would fight the civil resisters in a civilised manner. I could have had nothing to say if in dealing with the civil resisters the Government had satisfied itself with applying the ordinary processes of law. Instead, whilst the known leaders have been dealt with more or less according to the legal formality, the rank and file have been often savagely and in some cases even indecently assaulted. Had these been isolated cases, they might have been overlooked. But accounts have come to me from Bengal, Behar, Utkal, U. P., Delhi and Bombay confirming the experiences of Gujarat of which I have ample evidence at my disposal. In Karachi, Peshawar and Madras the firing would appear to have been unprovoked and unnecessary. Bones have been broken, private parts have been squeezed for the purpose of making volunteers give up, to the Government valueless, to the volunteers precious, salt. At Mathura an Assistant Magistrate is said to have snatched the national flag from a ten year old boy. The crowd that demanded restoration of the flag thus illegally seized, is reported to have been mercilessly beaten back. That the flag was subsequently restored betrayed a guilty conscience. In Bengal there seem

to have been only a few prosecutions and assaults about salt, but unthinkable cruelties are said to have been practised in the act of snatching flags from volunteers. Paddy fields are reported to have been burnt, eatables forcibly taken. A vegetable market in Gujarat has been raided because the dealers would not sell vegetables to officials. These acts have taken place in front of crowds who, for the sake of Congress mandate have submitted without retaliation.

Before then the reign of terrorism that has just begun overwhelms India, I feel that I must take a bolder step, and if possible divert your wrath in a cleaner if more drastic channel. You may not know the things that I have described. You may not even now believe in them. I can but invite your serious attention to them.

For according to the science of Satyagraha, the greater the repression and lawlessness on the part of authority, the greater should be the suffering courted by the victims. Success is the certain result of suffering of the extremest character, voluntarily undergone.

I know the dangers attendant upon the methods adopted by me. But the country is not likely to mistake my meaning. I say what I mean and think. And I have been saying for the last fifteen years in India and outside for twenty years more and repeat now that the only way to conquer violence is through non-violence pure and undefiled. I have said also that every violent act, word and even thought interferes with the progress of non-violent action. If in spite of such repated warnings people will resort to violence, I must disown responsibility save such as inevitably attaches to every human being for the acts of every other human being. But the question of responsibility apart, I dare not postpone action on any cause whats-

over, if non-violence is the force, the seers of the world have claimed it to be and if I am not to believe my own extensive experience of its working."

All that day he had been working as usual very intensely and at about 11-30 p. m. he had gone to bed, all fatigued. His day of silence had already begun on that evening. At about 12-45 a flash of light was thrown on his face. He got up to see the Governor's warrant read to him and within a short time went along with the District Magistrate of Surat and several policemen who had come to arrest him in the dead of night. The worshippers of brute force were either afraid of this very incarnation of love and Ahimsa and so they had to come in the dark; or the people whose righteous indignation they feared to arouse. Gandhiji's pilgrimage terminated in the Yervada Jail the next morning but the march of his companions and the duty of his countrymen had still remained unfinished.

Immediately after Gandhiji's arrest the Grand Old Man of Gujarat, Sjt. Abbas Taiyabji filled his place and announced in his speech at Jalalpore, his intention of fulfilling Gandhiji's programme of raiding the Dharasana salt works. On the 8th May, a war council was formed to conduct the campaign. Along with Abbas Saheb there were in the council Sjts. Imam Abdul Kadir Bawazir of Satyagraha Ashram, Manilal Gandhi, Narhari D. Parikh of Gujarat Vidyapith, Pyarelalji, Gandhiji's secretary, Valji Desai, the secretary of the All India cow protection Association and Jugatram Dave, secretary of the Surat District Congress Committee. It was decided that Abbas Saheb should march towards Dharasana. To that purpose Abbas Saheb made the following public declaration:—

"In spite of the salt campaign having so long run on lines of perfect peace and non-violence, the officers, in the name of law and order have behaved in a way unbecoming any civilised Government; they have never hesitated to use brutal and indecent methods against the Satyagrahis. Therefore, Gandhiji intended to take such a step as would either compel the Government to change their treatment of the Satyagrahis and deal with them in a civilised way or to use lathis or fire arms against them.

In order to fulfil the intention, Gandhiji had drafted a letter as a notice to the Viceroy, which I have afterwards forwarded to him. In the letter he has declared his intention of raiding the salt works at Dharasana.

That being our position, it is incumbent upon us to fulfil the scheme he had contemplated. So I intend to march on foot from Camp Karadi along with Gandhiji's first satyagrahi batch. Our batch will reach Dharasana on the 14th evening and will march on the 15th morning to get possession of the salt works."

The government also was making its necessary preparations. On the 11th, Mr. Kothawala went to Abbas Saheb with a letter from the District Magistrate, as if to forewarn him of his arrest the next day. The letter contained a warning that the step which Abbas Saheb was contemplating upon, was unlawful and legal steps would be taken against him if he did not desist. from committal thereof. Abbas Saheb thanked the officer for the courtesy of the Government but at the same time assured him that his determination was not to change.

On the 12th morning at 6 o'clock the enthusiastic satyagrahis gathered together, ready to march. The revered Ba (Mrs. Gandhi) garlanded the Grand Old



Man with a garland of handspun yarn. Distinguished and ordinary spectators had gathered in a large number. Gandhiji's beloved song—"Vaishnava Jan"—was sung and the party sent out on their march. Within 5 minutes some 200 policemen with lathis and guns could be seen. The batch was surrounded by them. The district Magistrate declared them an unlawful assembly and ordered them to disperse. Abbas Saheb boldly defied the order and gladly invited the lathis and the guns. At once the whole batch was arrested, put into motor lorries and taken to the Jalalpore court. Sjt. Jugatram Dave who had only come to see Abbas Saheb was also arrested. All were tried on the same day. Abbas Saheb was sentenced to 6 months, simple imprisonment, Jugatram to 6 months, rigorous and 54 others to 3 months, rigorous.

The war council was prepared for this sort of emergency. More than 200 volunteers from the district of Surat were sent to Untadi camp immediately after the arrest. For a time it was decided to undertake the raid on the morning of the 13th under the leadership of Manilal Gandhi, but afterwards it was thought proper to stick to the old arrangement and take the first raid on the 15th under the leadership of Shrimati Sarojini Devi, who had to take the place of Abbas Saheb as decided by Gandhiji.

She arrived at the Untadi camp in the early morning on the 15th May, direct from the Allahabad meeting of the All India Congress Working Committee. At six o'clock all the volunteers gathered in the camp compound, sang 'Vaishnava Jan,' bowed to the national flag, received blessings from Ba and a batch of 50 from Bardoli commenced march exactly at 6-30, Sarojini Devi leading them. At 5 mi-

nuetes past seven, they reached the Government custom's house, the preventive officer's office—where the police confronted them. They formed a close chain in the front. They were by no means unarmed. All of them had either lathis or guns with them. The Police superintendent and the District Magistrate told Sarojini Devi that they could only go further by breaking through the cordon, to which she replied "We will wait till Doom's day, we do not intend to break the cordon by physical force." Within ten minutes somebody brought a chair from a neighbouring house. She sat in it and all the volunteers too sat down and began to spin their Taklis.

At this time some salt workers (Agarias) were sitting behind the police. It is said they did not listen to the officers' advice to tell the satyagrahis that the salt was theirs and not the government's, and so they were turned out of the salt works. Anyhow, the work had stopped and they had been turned out.

For some time, the reporters and photographers were allowed to stay near the batch. At about 8-30 Sarojini Devi and some volunteers asked for water from the red-cross men but the police did not allow it to be given to them. Sjt Vaikuntha Desai brought some books and water for her but she was not allowed to get them. Sjt Vaikuntha Desai remonstrated that so long as they were not arrested, the Government had no right to stop these things. But he received a rude reply, was asked to "go away". The Police Superintendent said "It is a shame on India that you bring a woman for fighting". He was aptly replied that it did not behove the officers of this Government who had charged horses on women gone to do the work of mercy, to utter such words. Gandhiji had kept

women aloof for the time being to give the Government full scope for their brute force against men. But at Viramgam they had attacked the non-combatant ladies and shown that they were not fit for the compliment for chivalry which Gandhiji had given them and for the consideration which he had shown them by taking along with him men only. Now it was in the fitness of things that Indian womanhood should come forward to protect its own honour. India has shown that her women too are brave enough to stand unarmed before armed policemen, more rough and even brutal in their behaviour. Sarojini Devi's was quite an exceptional case. Numbers of women are to-day prepared to immolate themselves for the cause of their country, and yet how few have been sent to take direct action to break law !

It has been a long digression.

After 10 a. m. the reporters and others were sent away and the whole batch was detached and surrounded by police. Women tried to take water to the volunteers but they were not allowed to do so, some women were even prepared to break through the police cordon and give water to the volunteers at the risk of being beaten. One officer told them, "why do you commit theft like this ?" The women boldly replied, "It is you who are thieves. You have stolen away our beloved Bapu." One of them told the policemen, "Well, here is water for you. You must be feeling thirsty. You, too, are our brothers. Since you do not allow our brothers there to get this water, you can take it yourselves." Another woman told an officer "Give up this vicious service, put out this dress and put on Khaddar. If you cannot maintain yourselves any other way, we will give

you sufficient to maintain you and your women and children. But is it possible you have women and children? If you had, you could not harrass the Satyagrahis like that."

One officer tried to defend the Government: "These people have today come to take salt. Tomorrow they would dare plunder the treasury. Can we allow them to do that?" He also threatened them to shoot them with bullets!

A delicate woman sitting in the heat of the sun with 50 Satyagrahis! What a sanctifying sight it was! Thousands of people had been waiting to see the sight. Women from the neighbouring villages came with water and were disappointed. It was feared that Sarojini Devi would faint by noon. But she kept up spirits—talking with the officials, probably, cutting jokes and delighting them. Mr. Robinson, the Superintendent of police had boasted in the morning to stay on the field as long as Sarojini Devi stayed there. But the poor man had often to go to take his meals and tiffin.

At about one o'clock in the night, God knows why, the batch was allowed food and water. Sarojini Devi was allowed to receive her bedding. All slept on the ground for the whole night.

On the 16th, 3 batches of 50 each were sent in the morning to 3 different places. They were all stopped by the police. At about 10 o'clock, the batch of Sarojini Devi was declared arrested and taken by the police outside the salt limit where they were released! After 27 hours the batch returned to the camp and took their well-earned rest. Sarojini Devi was warmly received.

*The authorities played the same trick with the other 3 batches. They were declared arrested, put into motor lorries, taken outside their limit and released. But these were fresh batches. They immediately went back and gave a good fight all the day. A batch of about 50 from Surat went to the field at about 2 p. m. and skillfully reached the salt pans and took some salt. The police used their lathis and injured some 11 of them. The other batches did not try to get salt from the pans because the aim was the possession of the salt heaps.*

In the evening, 225 volunteers who had remained on the field were arrested and taken into a yard. They were kept there for 13 days in the open, were given dirty and meagre food. For about a week, they did not get even their bath. Most of them had gone on hunger-strike for 4 days. On the 29th they were convicted, 9 were released and the rest were sent to different terms, from 1 month to 9 months.

From 17th to 20th, batches were sent everyday and in the evening they were arrested and released outside. It was considered impractical and unnecessary to conduct this sort of play warfare any longer and so it was decided to lead a mass raid on the morning of the 21st. On the evening of the 20th, the Untadi camp there were more than 1700 men. The volunteers were full of enthusiasm. Next morning was to begin the real and decisive battle.

The battle of Dharasana makes it amply clear to the world how far a civilised western Government ruling over another civilised nation can go to show its inhuman side. There at Dharasana were two parties arrayed against one another. One of them was



Sgt. Narhari Parikh, who directed the Campaign from 14th to 23rd May. He was wounded in the raid of 21st and is now in jail.



A Scene of the Camp Hospital at Untadi.

peaceful, non-violent and unarmed, pledged not to raise a finger in retaliation to any kind of provocation from the other side. They believed their cause to be sacred. They bore no malice, no hatred, no illwill to the oppressors. They only wanted to destroy the system which was responsible for all the oppression and atrocities. The other party was bent upon maintaining their inhuman system of keeping a whole nation in slavery and starvation. They wanted to terrorise the nation and to achieve that end, were prepared to utilise all means of destruction they could command.

On the 21st of May—a day which will be remembered in the annals of India for all time to come, the day on which man's suffering power was put to severe test, the day on which violence sustained a defeat from non-violence, since it did not result in counter-violence, the day on which a new experiment in the science of war was tried. A non-violent army of 1570 determined volunteers clad in Khaddar marched on to Dharasana Salt Depot. They knew what was in store for them. They were prepared for the worst. Their leader, Imam Saheb, an old comrade of Mahatma Gandhi and a devoted Muslim, was filled with religious enthusiasm. His colleagues, the youthful Manilal Gandhi, Narhari Parikh and Pyarelalji, were radiant with faith in non-violence getting victorious over violence. As soon as the volunteers appeared on the field and reached the Salt Depot, barricaded by barbed wire fences and guarded by police pickets stationed both inside and outside being armed with thick *lathis*, they were ordered to halt. But there was no halting. The brave army was rushing forward to court severe beating or even death.



Immediately the police charged them with *lathis*. Volunteer after volunteer was falling down on the ground after bravely sustaining a few *lathi* blows. The officials were busy giving orders "beat them, beat them, *maro, maro.*" They also took part in the general *lathi* charge. The whole field presented a ghastly appearance. People at a distance distinctly heard the *lathi* blows. In a short half hour more than three hundred received injuries. Within the next hour the number of wounded could be counted by the hundred. The Red-Cross volunteers were too few to cope with the removal of the wounded and the disabled. They had to be carried along the narrow banks of the salt pans filled with water on both sides. There was a moat surrounding the depot. The stretcher-bearers had to wade through it and stretchers, as it happened, also were few in number. The wounded had therefore, to be lifted on the back of volunteers. They were placed in the open field near the moat in spite of the scorching heat. Doctors gave them immediate treatment and then they had to wait about two hours before they could be removed to the camp hospital. The village women with tears in their eyes were nursing the wounded. In a very short time the vast area outside the moat presented the appearance of a war-hospital. No shrieking, no sighing was heard from the volunteers. They were patiently bearing what they had gladly invited. Soon after Manilal Gandhi was declared arrested. Immediately afterwards an over-enthusiastic officer, Mr. Alamshah gave him some *lathi* blows on the back. Narharibhai went to the larger batch of volunteers to lead them further. He received blows very systematically, first on his feet, then on his back, then on his hands. Finally the finishing touch was given with a blow on his

bald head which was covered with blood. He fell down. His faithful volunteers had tried to surround him in order to save him from the *lathis*.

The other two members of the War Council were arrested just after reaching the battlefield. Old Imam Saheb and young Pyarelal were arrested earlier. They had not the good luck of receiving the *lathi* blows. On their side of the field *lathis* alone were not considered sufficient. A horse was charged the volunteers. Shrimati Sarojini Devi, the Nightingale of India and the General of the volunteers' Corps, was flying here and there inspecting and inspiring the *satyagrahis*. She was a non-combatant but was all the same anxiously watching the affray. When the *lathi* charges were too severe to bear and when hundreds had received the blows the less valiant began to retreat. They were driven back to some distance from the depot. Sarojini Devi could not bear this sight. Her valiant soul could no longer be kept in restraint. She immediately went to the squadron of volunteers and was about to exhort her soldiers to carry on the fight when she was arrested. While departing, she asked her soldiers not to flinch but to fight non-violently.

But the volunteers were utterly exhausted. They could not summon up energy enough to force their way to the depot once again for the day. They sat down, and waited on the field till evening.

The Satyagraha camp presented the appearance of a big hospital. The wounded could be seen everywhere. Some had bandages tied round their heads, some round their hands, some round their chests, some round their legs and feet. These bandages were

the only rewards that the Satyagrahi volunteer could cherish. They were ample certificate for their admirable bravery and non-violence.

In the evening most of the volunteers on the field were driven back by the police to the camp. At night some eighty volunteers were declared arrested but after being taken some distance from the camp they were released.

The raid was not to be taken that day. Such of the volunteers as could not bear the suffering were given permission to withdraw. The camp was to be re-organised. But who could tell what was to happen within the next three hours?

At ten o'clock rumour went round that the police had come to get the camp evacuated. Soon after about fifty policemen with *lathis* and a hundred Sikh mititary arrived on the scene. The officers declared the place, meeting ground for members of an unlawful assembly and gave fifteen minutes' time to vacate it.

The volunteers at once were gathered in the compound. Those who dared not stand the coming ordeal were requested to leave the camp immediately. Several did so. About two hundred remained seated, reciting prayers. Exactly at twenty minutes past ten, the police began the charge. The *lathis* began to descend on living human bodies. The scene on the previous day was re-enacted with the only difference that the volunteers were sitting still. They refused to budge. The police began to drag them. Some volunteers who had been wounded had also been sitting there. They too were not spared. A national flag was snatched away from the hands of a boy. Another was torn off from of the flag-staff. All the while none uttered a single word of complaint. The

volunteers were dragged out of the compound, lifted bodily and thrown like sand bags into the thorny hedges. It took them an hour to clear the compound of the volunteers. But forty two could not be removed even by these brutal methods. The officials resorted to their usual trick, declared them arrested and after half an hour left them outside the village of Untadi unmolested. About twenty of the number returned to the camp while the others were asked to go to their respective places of work. Narharibhai, Miss Maniben and some others were left undisturbed.

The camp was now reduced to a small number. Everywhere there was silence and quiet.

In the evening a police official came to the camp and searched the papers. Next morning the District Magistrate came and threatened to demolish the camp in case we did not evacuate the place and cease to bring more volunteers. Narharibhai plainly told him: "We are not going to vacate the camp, neither shall we cease bringing in more volunteers if such be prepared to come here."

The same morning Sjt. Narharibhai dictated the following message:

### **Keep the Flag Flying**

"Keep the Dharasana flag flying. The camp was demolished yesterday with the help of the military. This morning the Dist. Magistrate, the District Superintendent of Police and the Deputy Superintendent had come to me and asked me to vacate the Camp. my answer naturally was in the negative, come what may; and very likely they may arrest me soon and demolish the Camp. In that case, it would be my earnest appeal to Gujarat and the whole of India to carry on the struggle. It should be remembered that

those alone who can face lathis and bullets with perfect non-violence on their part, can come to Dharasana. I feel confident such valiant men won't be wanting. They need no captain. They themselves may assume the leadership and be at the front. May God grant us strength to stand the acid test."

The officer returned in the afternoon of the 23rd and looked into with great care, all the papers belonging to the inmates of the camp. Some twenty policemen surrounded us. We were going on with our own work. As it was hot, we offered our police brethren a drink of cold fresh water. On the morning of the 21st and 22nd, we had given them our blood as patiently and with perfect composure. When the police came to drive us out of our place on the 22nd morning, they helped themselves to some fruits from our larder which we had stocked for the wounded soldiers. If they had only asked of us we should have gladly given them whatever they wanted.

But that is by the way, When the search was over, the officer told Narharibhai at 3-30 P. M. that he was under arrest. His luck was enviable. He got both blows and jail. He immediately got ready to go. His soldiers bowed to him. He took them into his embrace and blessed them. We all immediately sat down and sang Gandhiji's beloved song '*Vaishnav Jan.*' We had sung the same song when the fifteen hundred and seventy had marched to Dharasana two days earlier. At that time also Imam Saheb's prayer to God was inspiring, coming as it did from the depth of a devout heart. He had said, tears choking his throat, "Oh God, we are all weaklings. Do not put us to hard test. We have plunged in this war in Thy name. Thou art our last resort."

whether Thou destroyest us or savest us. Let our faith in Thee be constant. Father, Lord, we have been tried too much. The limit has come. It is unbearable. Test us no more. Lend us Thy kind hand. We are weak, give us the strength, always to utter Thy name even when our spirit should be leaving our body."

Narharibhai was taken away. When he was tried before the court at Dharasana he made a statement, from which the following extract is taken:

"The Government has been all along found adopting the policy of arresting the leaders and only molesting the volunteers. I deem it a great fortune that I, though a leader, should have an opportunity of receiving lathi blows before being arrested. I thank God that all the volunteers during these raids on Dharasana have kept perfectly non-violent. I don't think we have been defeated because we have not been able to get a pinch of salt at Dharasana. There is no defeat in a Satyagraha campaign. The greater the amount of sacrifice, the greater the success. I do believe that the sacrifice and suffering at Dharasana must have, in smaller or larger measure, softened the hearts of officers, military and policemen. The constant flow of sacrifice on the field of Dharasana and elsewhere shall continue and it shall either mend this Government or end it."

Those who remained behind had stuck to his decision to carry on the fight till they were alive and outside the prison. Dharasana is Gandhiji's legacy to the nation. The Working Committee of the Congress had decided to make it an all-India question. Since the time of white domination, Gujarat had never witnessed such a sight. The very idea of a war had been foreign to her. And this sort of non-violent war is

unprecedented in her history, perhaps in all history. Such belaboring on one side and such silent suffering on the other, what a contrast it presented! Utterly inhuman treatment on one side and perfectly human behaviour on the part of the other!

And this is the Government of India, red in all its tooth and claw. It can strike its *lathi* on harmless, unarmed citizens. On the 21st, they beat some 740 volunteers out of whom 320 were admitted to the hospital. On the 22nd they beat more than 150 men. 20 being sent to hospital. One brave volunteer, Sjt. Bhailal Dajibhai Patel was beaten to death. Such is the violent nature of this Government. And it poses as the custodian of peace and order. The poor policemen had been entirely misguided. The Sikh military sepoys who accompanied the officials on the 22nd on their mission of dispersing the alleged unlawful assembly, contained some grains of kind feeling within their breasts. Some of them did actually shed tears when the volunteers were beaten and dragged. Bhailal had such a severe beating that he was rendered unconscious. He was given an injection in the hospital. On regaining consciousness, he related his woeful tale in these words:—  
 “Four or five policemen sat on my chest with heavy shoes, and they kicked me on the abdomen with shoes. They also thrust *lathi* on the abdomen. I don’t recollect what happened next.” Such barbarous and atrocious treatment was meted out to others also. The Doctors treated this victim of police vandalism with much care but their efforts proved fruitless and the valiant soldier succumbed to his injuries. A true soldier’s death he died. Mr. Ratilal Desai, of Surat who was present there states:—

“On 22nd the policemen and military came at about 10 o'clock to disperse the camp when volunteers gathered on the prayer ground. I was standing by them as a redcross volunteer. As they refused to move, the police cruelly beat them with lathis. They then dragged them to the outer gate. Bhailal attempted to return and the police and the hirelings—goondas of the Government—gave him kicks and lathi thrusts into his abdomen. He was rendered unconscious and we removed him on stretcher to the hospital. Dr. Bharucha attended the case. . . . He expired within half an hour.”

After the death, the corpse was demanded by Doctors for a post-mortem. It was sent to Bulsar. Dr. Bhaskar Patel M. D. accompanied and desired to be present there but the Government Doctor did not allow him to do so. Even the persuasions of the Chairman of the Municipality failed. Dr. Bhasker Rao then demanded the report of the Post mortem which too was denied and he was referred to the Fozdar. On the strength of a message from the Police Officer through Miss Maniben Patel, Dr. Patel, applied to Mr. Braham, the Dist. Magistrate. On 24th May three officers came to the hospital and demanded to see the records which Dr. Bhasker Rao assured were properly kept but were sent to Bulsar for filing A statement from Dr. Patel was recorded wherein he has stated that sudden death can accrue from dormant beating on abdomen. Dr. Bhaskarrao in reply to his application for the P. M. report received a reply from Mr. Braham that his application could not be granted as the report was not a public document.

The Government as usual hushed up such a serious case.



The corpse was then handed over to the public for cremation and a huge funeral procession of not less than 7000 people was taken out and the dead cremated with due honour.

Satyagrahis did not succeed in bringing salt from the salt heaps. They were beaten, wounded, abused. They sustained a partial defeat in so far as some of them gave way before the furious *lahti* charge. But those who suffered the blows, did so quite joyfully. Gujarat has been regarded as a province of non-mililant, commercial people. But Gujarat proved that her brave sons could endure untold miseries and yet stick to their noble resolve. Herein lay their success. They have unmasked to the whole world the real demoniacal nature of this Government behind all its meshes of laws and system. They have compelled the Government to use brute force against a non-violent army and thus own its defeat and inability to rule India by civilised methods. They have shown that the Government is not founded on love and consent of the people but that it rules the people against their will, keeping them down by sheer physical force. They can rule India so long only as the people are not strong and determined enough to undergo all possible suffering unflinchingly in order to overthrow this system of Government. Dharasana gave us a lesson. Who will say that the Satyagrahis were defeated? Defeated they were not. They offered noble sacrifices, they withstood like statues of wood against the assaults of the police and yet they did not raise their litile finger in retaliation. Can any sane man believe the charge of violence hurled by this Government against Satyagrahis? They have offered non-violence against violence, love against hatred, humanity against

inhumantiy. Their sacrifice has stirred the feelings of the nation to the depths of its heart. The nation has received a rude shock. We hope their suffering will bring about the desired change of heart on the part of the oppressors.

On the 25th, Sjt. Ambalal Patel to whom the responsibility of the camp was entrusted to and Dr. Tribhuvandas were arrested at 8 a. m. The police did not leave the camp at ease and unmolested. They often visited it during the day. They issued orders under the Land Revenue Code to vacate the camp by 3 p. m. Twenty-three had Satyagrahis decided to stay on.

During the second week the atrocities perpetrated by the Government quite threw into the background the horrors of the 21st & 22nd May. Their black deeds at Viramgam would be regarded too mild when compared with their ugly crimes here on the 30th and 31st May and 1st June. They had brought all their ingenuity to the service of their criminal propensity and systematically worked out all sorts of inhuman methods of beating.

But that will be described in its proper place. It will be more convenient to follow the events chronologically.

After it was decided that the Dharasana campaign should be carried on, volunteers from all parts of Gujarat began to pour down to Dharasana. When Ahmedabad heard the disquieting news that Dharsana fight was to be suspended, it was disappointed and even got indignant. It decided that Dharasana should go on. The war council at Dharasana had also come to the same decision even earlier. Ahmedabad's joy and enthusiasm knew no bounds. The whole of Gujarat

caught its spark and was once again set aflame. Dharasana now no longer remained located in the salt depots of that little village but the Government, by its peculiar tactics spread its roots in various places.

On the 25th May, Seth Ranchhodlal, a prominent millowner of Ahmedabad and a devoted follower of Gandhiji with Muni Jinavijayji, a jain scholar and a professor at the Gujarat Vidyapith and a batch of 50 Volunteers was given a hearty send off by the people of Ahmedabad. The Government did not intend to allow them to reach Dharasna. Their progress was stampeded at Barejadi Station at night and Seth Ranchhodlal was dragged out of the compartment Muniji and all the Volunteers were also declared arrested and compelled to get down from the train. An impatient Government tried them the very next day at Barejadi and Seth Ranchhodlal was sentenced to 1 year's rigorous, Muniji to 5½ months' and 40 Volunteers to various term of imprisonment

On the same day the 26th May, the Camp at Untadi was demolished. The District Magistrate gave the inmates a notice to clear away the place by 8. p. m. and declared the land confiscated as it was put to non-agricultural use without the permission of the Government. In fact the land has not been cultivated for more than last 40 years. But the vagaries of law are too intricate for ordinary men to escape.

At 11 a. m. when the volunteers were taking their meals, an European Officer came with some Policemen and they began to pluck mangoes from the mango trees. The officer requested the inmates to give some more mangoes which they willingly gave him from their stock. By 3 o'clock, most of the useful things were removed from the Camp. The two tents

were not to be removed because they were confiscated as structures on the confiscated land.

At about 4 o'clock the hoard of Policemen and their Officers appeared. The 23 Satyagrahis were ordered to vacate but they did not move, two of them were dragged and the rest were compelled by the police to walk out. Then the whole camp was razed to the ground and the heap of materials was guarded by the police. Only the hospital was left standing. The officers had said in the morning that there was no objection to the hospital remaining there as long as the doctors required it.

At about 6 p. m. Mr. Garrett and some white officers passed out of the gate. The Satyagrahis who had been turned out were sitting just in front of it, busy plying their Taklis. Every time the gate was opened, they were put to much inconvenience. But the police-motor was inside the gates and when the officers passed out, one of them ordered the car to be driven over the Satyagrahis if they did not move. The people, looking from a distance were shocked to hear this order and instinctively came near the brave resisters to see how this new form of torture would work. Thakkar Bapa's old eyes were also intently watching it.

The gate was open and the motor started but it stopped. The human in the officials was aroused and they repeatedly began telling the Satyagrahis to go away. But they were deaf to their futile cries. The officers could not tolerate it and some policemen were ordered to drag them aside. They had formed themselves into chains of 5. The police dragged each chain away like dead cattle and thus the passage was made clear of the resisters.

The whole night and the next day the place was guarded by police pickets, some armed with firearms and others with lathis. In the morning an officer came and ordered the Doctor to vacate the hospital too. There were three wounded volunteers lying there. The doctor tried to remind the officer what the other officers had promised the day before and what Colonel Kamat, the Government doctor had assured him of. But Mr. Subawala was stubborn. The Doctor managed to remove the patients into the village and immediately the hospital too was demolished. All the material was carried away by the officers. The salt workers were coerced to lend their carts for the dirty business *viz.* the removal of the plundered materials. The officers left the place whereupon the Satyagrahis immediately went and reoccupied the camp.

The aim of the Government in demolishing the Untdi camp was frustrated because new camps at once sprang up at Bulsar, Billimora, Bhadeli and Bhagada, places not very far from the battle-field. Section 144 had been promulgated in Dharasana, Chharwada and Umarsadi from the 13th May for one month. The same was given a wider scope. For one month from 23rd May, Untdi and Dungri including the limits of the Station were placed under that section. A strong military guard of Sikh battalion was posted at Dungri station and batches of volunteers were not allowed to pass therefrom to Dharasana. On 27th a batch of 25 from Surat got down at Dungri and before they marched out of the railway premises, they were halted, their captain, Mr. Puratan Buch, was dragged out and declared arrested and the rest were sent back to Surat. Puratan has been since then tried and sentenced to 1 year's rigorous imprisonment.

In the morning of the 28th, a batch of 34 from Ahmedabad, led by Sjt. Balwantrai Thakore, the old experienced teacher of the Proprietary High School of Ahmedabad and one of the leaders of that city, came from Bulsar to swell the thin ranks of the Camp at Untdi. But they had not to wait long. At about 1-30 p. m. the custodians of Law and Order came, arrested Sjt. Balwantrai and took away the volunteers giving them a false pretext of arrest. They were taken to Surat at night but were given no food there as they were promised. So they got out of the train and marched back to Dharasana, police not preventing them. Sjt. Thakore was sentenced to 6 months' simple imprisonment two days later.

But within two hours, the batch of 24 that was stopped at Dungri the day before, rounded up to Untdi via Billimora and occupied the camp. Two hours later a batch of 41 from Borsad joined them. But all of them met with the same ludicrous treatment. At 6-30 the party came and 65 Satyagrahis went with them to Dharasana, taking it that they were arrested. But they were packed off to Bombay. However, next day they returned to Bulsar, and were ready for the fresh raid. The Government had intended to tire out the Satyagrahis by such ingenious but dirty tricks but the result was quite the contrary. These men became the travelling-propagandists for Dharasana from Bombay to Ahmedabad and the Government in its folly, lost their balance of mind and tried to apply strange methods without foreseeing the consequences thereof.

One would think they had returned to sanity, since they had given up use of lathis for the last 6 days. But those days were the only moments of sanity —

which in fact turned out to be folly—a temporary relaxation in the constant madness and delirium.

The camps at Bulsar, Bhadeli, Billimora all overflowed with the enthusiasm of volunteers. They were filled with new life. Youths of these places were all engaged in one or the other work at the camps while even the ladies, like the Akali practice, deemed it a religious duty to do some good turn at the camp in the service and for the comfort of the soldiers of Freedom.

Abdullah Seth of Shiroda fame led a batch of 75 to Bulsar. He and his party openly defied 144 on the 28th at Chharvada and next-day they attempted a raid on Dharasna. Abdullah Seth stepped into Swami Anand's shoes at Vile Parle since his incarceration. Abdullahhai is advanced in age but he has the enthusiasm of a young man. He was prepared even to lay down his life and when the police saw that he was not one that would be daunted, they lifted him up and took him to a distance. This old muslim leader received several lathi blows on back and chest. He was breathing hard. In their party was Prof. Mohanlal Shah who was working only as a publicity officer. He too invited the wrath of the Police. Even the Red-Cross Volunteers had a few lathi blows. They dragged this batch at the point of lathi upto Dungri where the party was entrained and released at Bulsar.

But this was just the shadow of the coming events. On the 30th May in the morning at 7-45 a batch of 111 Volunteers from Surat, Broach and Ahmedabad set on their march to the field. They divided themselves into 2 parties and began to advance. The police were not quite prepared for this. Many

had not even put on their uniform when the bugle summoned them. Some brave volunteers proceeded a great deal, The choice of the Captains of the batches was really very happy. They boldly ran and got quite near the wirefencing. One tugged at a wire and pulled it out from the posts. But a police just then gave a severe blow on his hand and another on his head and he fell down unconcious. Blood began to flow out profusely from the wound.

Others were similarly dealt with. Lathis were particularly aimed at the head and many heads were broken. The white officers particularly tried to break heads, for the policemen were getting more and more disgusted with their work as days rolled on.

Twenty nine persons were beaten severely. Some of them were thrown into the ditch, some in the thorn-hedges. Most of the volunteers received lathi blows, which were not severe enough to disable them.

Some more parties from Bulsar had also come on the field while these 111 were being belaboured. They also got the same sort of treatment. One batch of Viramgam led by Sjt. Vajubhai Shukla went to the field to suffer terribly. They were stopped on the road, beaten, arrested and kept under guard. Their captain was separated, tried next day and sentenced to 1 year R. I. The whole batch of 24 was driven out by lathi blows, but six were persistent. They were put in a car, carried beyond Dungari and there they were released. All of them were extremely tired but they refused to take any rest.

In the heat of the midday sun they began to march back towards Dharasana. One fainted after walking a little distance. He was entrusted to some sympathisers and the rest marched on. On reaching Dharasana the brutalities once more began to rain on them. They were beaten, kicked, abused, thrown aside.



When the officers got tired, they began to persuade these Satyagrahis to return to their wives and children. This form of physical torture combined with the effort to weaken them mentally cannot have any parallel. But these were true Satyagrahis. They lovingly talked with their oppressors, thanked them for their kind advice and remained firm. In the night they were called back and they returned very reluctantly in a motor car, for they were too weak even to stand.

The action on that day in other parts of the field was over within an hour. The rest of the day was given to hospital work.

But the morning of the 31st was to unfold new forms of brutality latent within human nature. At 7 a. m. a batch of 111 (59 from Maharashtra, 52 from Kheda) started for the salt depot. The Maharashtra batch took the solemn vow not to return from the field without salt or without being carried away disabled or unconscious. All the batches, and every volunteer formed the same determination in their minds. All marched radiantly to the field. For three fourths of an hour nothing was heard of them. Another batch of 54 (Surat and Ahmedabad) became ready to march. News immediately arrived that the first two parties were being severely beaten, horses were charged on them. But the second party did march. A third was to march an hour later but the casualties were so large that they were employed in carrying the wounded to the hospital. The first batch had made an attack from two sides. Some had been able to make great headway. But the guards immediately got on the alert and they began to whirl their lathis and wound the volunteers. Seven horses appeared on the scene and began to chase those who were running in front of the heaps. They rushed further and further

and some reached the fences. The horsemen came up and struck down these brave men with their lathis. They were actually hunted down. All lay disabled or unconscious and every policeman who followed gave them one or two lathi blows as his quota to the infamous deed.

The others also were being attended to. They were not allowed to march further but neither were they prepared to go back. The sturdy marathas sat down and suffered patiently, repeating Ramnam. Each and everyone of them was beaten. They all remained there, for the red-cross workers were not allowed to go near them; on the contrary the latter were driven away insultingly.

In the other parts of the field, the same process was going on, volunteers being beaten, horses charged against them, some thrown into ditches, some in thorn hedges, some dragged. A new dirty weapon was used unsparingly. The officers and their mercenaries abused the volunteers so foully that it would be impossible for those who heard them to regard them civilised. And this was done in the presence of Miss Maniben, Sardar Vallabhbhai's militant daughter.

The Government was not prepared to tolerate their atrocities being published and so even press reporters were chased away. One white rider took away a Gandhi cap off one of the spectators' head. But the horses were better than their riders, most of whom were Europeans. The beasts would not charge against the innocent men quietly sitting in front of them whereupon they also were beaten and compelled to advance. When beasts become human, men turn brutal.

The task of carrying away the wounded was very difficult. Hundred and eleven were brought into the

hospital, all the remaining volunteers had received minor injuries. The heat of the sun was troublesome both to the wounded and those who carried them for about a mile.

Not much blood was spilt this day but many had lost consciousness. The blows were given very systematically. There was only one fracture of the right hand. But the cruelty surpassed that of the previous day. Some six had left on their bodies the marks of the horses' hoofs, one just on his abdomen. Most were beaten on the sides.

One minor incident will show how these officers loose their temper. One of them while chasing a volunteer in order to hunt him down, fell down from his horse and was exasperated. Immediately he ran up to the man and gave him some 20 blows with all the force he commanded. Such acts could be worthy of heartless, inhuman beings only.

But the first day of June took them still further away from humanity to brutality. 162 volunteers marched from Untadi in two different directions. Sounds of bugles at once summoned the policemen to the spot. The progress of the batches was blocked. For about 45 minutes no action was taken. The volunteers were sitting down and the guards were standing in front. The officers were holding consultation. Horses were called in for service. A warning was given, and about 15 Volunteers left the field. Then at once the lathi charge was commenced. Horses were also charged. Men after men began to fall and reel down. The havoc was perpetrated on all sides. All limits of decency had been transgressed and every one who had seen the doings of the police had been disgusted with them.

They had taken to quite a new form of terrorism. Volunteers were given lathi thrusts from all sides. But the most inhuman crime was the thrusts into and blows on the private parts. Some were made naked and the police poked lathi points into the anus. Private parts of some were squeezed. All that they did beggar description. For those who still retain any faith in the government, this *goodaism* will be an eye-opener. The day's happenings are aptly described in Young India, of 5th June, 1930 as below:—

#### June 1st

Yesterday it was felt that there could not be a more inhuman act than that of running the horses over the bodies of unconscious volunteers. But more was in store for us to day.

This morning 162 volunteers from Kheda Ahmedabad, Broach and Viramgam attempted to raid salt depots at 10 a. m. Some of them went to a depot nearer Untadi, whereas others from Broach marched towards one situated a mile away from the camp.

As soon as they got to the vicinity of the Depots, the police made a cordon and detained them in the scorching sun for over 45 minutes. Mr. Ismail Desai inaugurated a *lathi* charge and he was soon followed by the police. By about 12 noon almost every volunteer near that Depot was wounded.

After the charge, dragging them by hand or foot was an ordinary course to be followed. Volunteers were beaten mercilessly and brutally. The wounded were removed to the Untadi Camp and Bulsar hospitals. The total number of the wounded is 115—twenty five of them have received serious injuries, while fifteen of them were unconscious, one Satyagrahi was vomiting blood and two were getting convulsions.

One was stripped naked and a *lathi* was thrust into the *anus* by a sergeant. The volunteer tried to remove it but the demon again repeated the performance. Many volunteers received similar treatment and are suffering from injuries near the vital parts. One has his scrotum swollen and was senseless for some hours. The officers did not stop with this barbarity but went to the length of pricking babul thorns into the body of Aniruddha, a young lad from Bhavnagar. Doctors extracted them after his removal to Camp hospital, when he bled profusely and became senseless.

Two of the wounded who were taken possession of in a very precarious condition by Government were found thrown near the thorn fences late in the evening. One of them had received not less than 40 lathi blows. Both were dragged mercilessly and yet they did not retrace his steps. This doggedness offended the sergeant who ordered salt-mud from the ditch to be pushed into their mouths and then their heads dipped into the ditch water. The operation was repeated about 20 times. Then they were removed to Government hospital by the authorities in a senseless condition where they remained so for over three hours. On regaining consciousness, they were asked if they would go home and on their refusal to do so they were administered 10 to 15 blows and were dragged and thrown out at a distance, where they were picked up late at 6 P. M.

All these barbarities are resorted to after the advent of Mr. Neil of Viramgam fame. His heroism is being repeated here. We give below some instances from some of the statements made by the wounded:

1. Alamsha and some white officers with heavy shoes on, put their feet on the chest of one volunteer

and pressed him much. This death-dance made his respiration very hard.

2. Another was stripped naked and Alamsha gave three heavy kicks on his scrotum. He received several lathi blows on his chest, as well as on waist and back.

3. A volunteer who took part in the raid on the 21st. May returned to the field to-day. This persistency found disfavour with an officer who remarked, "I shall this time crush your nose to atoms," So saying he gave a blow on his nose. The nose naturally bled. Then a blow fell on his neck and the volunteer reeled to the ground. Four policemen were then made to lift him and the officer prodded his *lathi* into the *anus*. This volunteer was senseless for two hours.

4. One more volunteer was lying in a serious condition as a result of heavy *lathi* blows on his chest. He could breathe with great difficulty. He had severe pain in the chest and had a severe blow on the head. He had besides blows all over his body and remained unconscious for over two hours. A European officer ordered a stick to be placed between his two legs. After that, his *langoti* was pushed aside with a stick. But he saved his private parts from injury with a little cleverness. His shorts were torn and he received *lathi* blows on back and stomach.

The English people are credited with sportsmanship. Is it necessary to say that the manner in which they had been acquitting themselves at Dharasana is far from being sportsmanlike? The various kinds of brutality that they enacted on the field of Dharasana could not have been unpremeditated. They seem to have thought out ingeniously the whole process and systematically put it into practice.

The higher officials, the magistrate included remained present on the field and all the police officers, higher and lower participated in the affair, nay, the higher officials almost vied with each other in setting an example to their underlings. The poor souls were threatened with beating if they would not thrash the volunteers properly. The government did not stop there. They employed drunkards and goondas for this inhuman work. They could not offer any explanation for their behaviour. They would not even be prepared to offer any since they did it all with a purpose and deliberately, to terrorise the people and make a display of the force they commanded.

The following article in Young India by Sjt. Jairamdas gives a correct interpretation of Dharasana.

### **The Spirit of Dharasana**

The brute in man has shown its claws at Dharasana. The truth of what the agents of British rule have done there may never be allowed to cross the boundaries of India. If and when it is, Europe may hang its head in shame. Britain's exploits at Dharasana are an eternal blot on Western culture. The world's history has no parallel for them. What are the facts? Unarmed volunteers pledged to non-violence, openly courting imprisonment by committing a technical breach of a law condemned by every shade of public opinion are savagely set upon as if they were a band of outlaws armed to the teeth and bent upon some midnight crime against man and God. No attempt is made to arrest them and then permit the law to take its course. Under the orders of a power—drunk bureaucracy, the police take the law into their own hands. *Lathis* are flourished, heads are broken and three hundred peaceful Satyagrahis are made to shed blood, one of them, brave

Bhailalbhai of Palaj, succumbing to the injuries. The police retire from the field victorious and the volunteers remove their wounded comrades to a hastily improvised hospital. Can any civilised country be proud of the achievement?

The wonder is that all this is done in the name of law and constitution. What law and constitution permit the heartless scenes of insidious terrorism which have been enacted at Dharasana during the last week? In its insane anxiety to coerce the rising nation into submission, law and constitution have been thrown to the winds. We are the last to swear by the Salt Act. But the Government pretends to take its stand upon its provisions. We have been unable to trace anything in the Act sanctioning the reign of violence which the world has been witnessing in Gujarat. Section 41 of the Act makes it 'incumbent on every village officer and on every officer of the departments of Police, Customs, Opium, Abkari, Forests and Revenue to interpose for the purpose of preventing and to prevent, by the use of all reasonable means in his power, the commission of any offence punishable under this Act. The law does not authorise any officer to use 'all possible' means. He may employ only reasonable means. And so brutal *lathi* charges on unarmed and harmless Satyagahis are the 'reasonable' means approved by the Government for upholding the law. The formal breach of the law could have been prevented by the arrest of the volunteers at the Untadi camp before the raid commenced. But that method was not considered a 'reasonable' one. Section 39 of the Act empowers any salt-revenue-officer to 'detain and search, and if he thinks proper, arrest any person whom he has reason to believe to be guilty of any offence punishable



under this or any other law for the time being in relating to salt-revenue, or in whose possession contraband salt is found.' Under this Section the Dharasana Satyagrahis could have been placed in custody after they had 'raided' the salt depot, removed a few maunds of salt and thus committed an offence under the Act. But that would not have served the purpose of the Government. Its object is not simply to see that breaches of the law are punished by law. Its aim is a subtler one.

Let us not forget that a historic struggle is going on in this country between the forces of violence and those of non-violence. A pitched battle between them is being fought in Gujarat. At Dharasana the climax seems to have been reached. The Government wishes to crush the spirit of the people. Arrests have failed to do so. The method of starvation cannot be repeated without a very adverse reaction on public opinion. Insults, indecent tortures, stray assaults have all been without effect. So innocent, unarmed and unresisting Satyagrahis must be mowed down by *lathis* to teach the people a lesson. The body must be broken so that the mind may weaken. But India is doomed if its spirit quails before rifle or *lathi*. We know that Gujarat is aflame with indignation. Its man strength and its woman strength has yet to be fully mobilised. Its disciplined volunteers will throw up and obey new leaders from day to day. No province can respond to Mahatma Gandhi's message of non-violent resistance as Gujarat will. It will fight to the bitter end and lead the nation to victory. The rest of the country has to catch the spirit of Dharasana. Within each province are scattered smaller battlefields where the minions of Government are terrorising the people into surrender by arrests, assaults and worse. Violence and non-

violence are there too at grips. The civil resisters and the masses must face the harshest forms of official violence as unflinchingly as did the intrepid heroes of Dharasana. There can be but one end to such a contest. No power on earth can deny or delay freedom once the nation throws off lethargy and fear. Whatever future forms Satyagraha may take from time to time in Gujarat or in other provinces, the spirit of Dharasana must permeate the people. If it does, and so soon as it does, the victory is won."

After a day's rest, the Satyagrahis attempted another raid on the 3rd June in the morning. Sjt. Vaman Mukadam an ex-M.L.C. also went on the field with a batch from the Panchmahals. Other batches from Sindh, Kheda, and Ahmedabad too had joined the raid. The first party was declared arrested and sent away, Sjt. Mukadam being separated from them. He was taken some distance, given jerks, thrusts, two canes and was foully abused. The way in which he was deliberately insulted after being declared arrested was most abominable, which the reader will find from his own statement, printed elsewhere.

The volunteers who were released, immediately went again along with others. Most of them were severely beaten, abused, dragged. Horses too were charged on them. All the methods used previously were used against these also. Some volunteers were beaten more severely than others because some officers and policemen recognised them as leaders.

But everyday they would do something new. Till now they did not, as a rule, molest the villagers. But on 3rd June, two mounted Sawars, rode through the village at full gallop and beat people indiscriminately, even those who had taken no part in the raid. All this was done with the purpose of terrorising the people.

Fortunately, on that day, three impartial and unbiassed persons, Sjts. K. Natrajan, G. K. Deodhar and Husein Tyabjee had been there as spectators. In the morning they had gone to see the raid. They were standing at a pretty good distance from the field of operation when an officer came to them and ordered them to leave the place immediately. They pleaded they were mere spectators but the officers were unwilling to allow even spectators to remain there to witness their doings and so he rudely bade them go away or they would not be safe. Of course, they were obliged to retire to the village but before they left, they realised how law and order were preserved.

The result of the fight was as usual, 58 being removed to the hospital. Four days later, Sjt. Mukadam was arrested and sentenced to two years, rigorous imprisonment.

The monsoon was drawing nearer and the Satyagaraha had to be suspended for the season. A statement to that effect was issued by Sjt. Chhaganlal Joshi, who had been directing the operations:

“Non-violent raids on Dharasana salt depots will be suspended for the season on account of the approaching monsoon after one more raid.

No sooner did Sheth Ranchhodlal of Ahmedabad sound the bugle for the second series of raids on Dharasana, than hundreds of young men from Gujarat and elsewhere have offered their lives for the attainment of Swarajya. European and Indian police and other officials are breaking the heads of volunteers, as if they were so many cocoanuts, are dislocating their hands and legs. They prick thorns and pins into their bodies with a view to test if they were conscious or not, they make them naked, press their vital parts or poke lathis into them, thereby

making them unconscious, they give them dippings in salt water stream and push handfulls of salt or salt-mud into their mouths and noses. The number of volunteers subjected to such barbarities has been more than 1200 up-to-date, though as many as 2300 have, one and all, received lathi blows, over and above 229 who have been sent to jail. Even after these hardships and cruel treatment the onrush of volunteers has not abated a whit. Not only that but hundreds of them including those who have recovered from injuries are ready to suffer greater atrocities from policemen in order to put an end to Government's brutal and disgraceful policy by exposing it to the world and by appealing to their heart. In fact, the spirit of sacrifice and self-immolation has spread over the whole country. Non-violent soldiers from Maharashtra and Sindh had already had their share in the raids, those from Trivendrum have arrived on the spot, and those from Karnatak and the Punjab were on their way here. But unfavourable circumstances in the form of the approaching monsoons came in the way of the full expression of enthusiasm on the part of volunteers of spending away their lives in the cause of the country. It is therefore, desirable that the volunteers should divert their energies to the breaking of the two new ordinances recently promulgated by the Viceroy and thus to fulfill Gandhiji's programme. It may be remembered that Gandhiji and his band of 80 took a vow not to return to the Ashram before Swarajya was attained. Similarly the wounded and other Satyagrahis who have taken their share in Dharasana and those who are yet anxious to proceed there are requested not to go back to their normal work but to spread themselves and to create "Dharasanas", all around. I mean

thereby that salt raids may be restricted to such places and times as may be favourable and each village may be prepared as a field of action for civil disobedience by preaching non-payment of land revenue and picketing liquor and foreign cloth shops, and thereby court imprisonment, brutal assaults and even firing by the police and military.

Sheds for hospital and Satyagraha camp at Untadi have been razed to the ground, and the private lands on which they stood have been forfeited to the State. To create terror among the villagers of Untadi horsemen with lathis were let loose on non-combatant villagers men, women and children, military men were paraded in the streets of towns and villages with a view to make a display of their might. In spite of all this the active sympathy of the people round about the field of operations has not only not abated, but is daily increasing. They have been very helpful in the supply of cooked food to hundreds of volunteers from day to day and in the maintenance of hospitals where hundreds of wounded were treated as if in well-equipped military hospitals. Peasants, merchants, Doctors, ladies, in fact the whole mass of the people have wonderfully combined to conduct this non-violent war and the future historian of this great struggle for freedom, will take cognisance of these facts with great pride and satisfaction. Gujarat has given a wonderful share in the battle of Dharasana, other parts of the country like Maharashtra, Sind, and Malabar also assisting as much as they could. Mother India will ever remain proud of the achievement."

So the last raid was led on the 6th of June, just two months after the inauguration of the salt campaign at Dandi by Gandhiji. More than 150 volunteers marched to the field in the morning at 7 a. m. after repeating

**Vandemataram.** In a quarter of an hour they arrived near the police station when a wall of lathis was raised in front of them. All had to stop. Two or three tried to rush forward but they were beaten and struck down. The whole group sat down in order that they might not be dragged away easily. Some officer gave a warning that lathis and horses would soon be charged and the volunteers should therefore leave before it is done. Some 26 of them left the field. The scene that presented itself in the front of them was sufficient to make the boldest flinch. A moment more and the non-violent volunteers, without a single weapon of offence or defence would be beaten mercilessly. Those who went away were by means cowards but their courage could not stand the acid test, which they were invited to face.

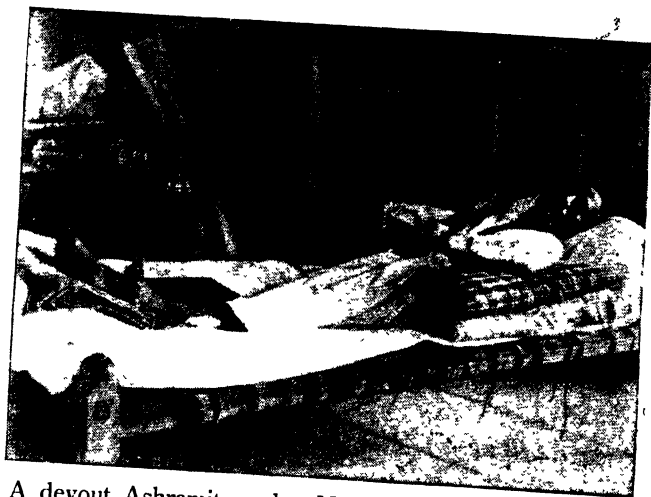
At once lathis began to fall and the volunteers sitting there began to roll down. However, they were determined not to leave unless physically removed. The beating continued. Mr. Ismail Desai was seen moving to and fro, freely using his lathi and instructing his men how and whom to beat more severely. The blows were most severe, so much so that the sound could be heard even at a distance of more than a furlong. They did not deal with one volunteer once for all. They beat him, dragged him some distance by hands or feet, left him there, treated another similarly, returned to the first and repeated the process on him again and again. In less than half an hour they had finished their work. The belaboured volunteers were all dragged a good distance whence the red-cross volunteers carried them on stretchers to the hospital. The policemen and the officers fully satisfied their thirst for blood, regarding it as their final feast.

The Satyagraha at Dharasana is for the time being postponed. Its results have been clearly seen by the people, its lessons have been unforgettably learnt by them. They have fully realised that the Government could go to any length, that no one was safe under its black regime and the people could only save themselves by courageously facing its atrocities and making a desperate attempt to mend it or end it. They could save themselves only by their own efforts, by becoming entirely self-reliant.

Naturally people look askance as to what was the good of being beaten like this. But has not this suffering its own consequences? In the three weeks, the eyes of millions of people have been rudely opened, the Government has lost all the sympathy and faith some people had for and in it. Its moral backbone is incurably broken. The whole nation has got disgusted with it and is pining to end the system that makes these barbarities possible under its regime, no matter what amount of sacrifice may be required to do so. The atrocities of the Government are getting every day more and more unbearable. Salt Satyagraha is not the only fight they are trying to suppress with such high-handedness. All public spirit is sought to be suppressed. Lathi Raj is the order of the day in this unfortunate land. As our people have set at naught the fear of jails the Government is using this new weapon of terrorism, in view of the former having proved ineffective. As soon as the people overcome its fear and can stand it as manfully and bravely as they do the prison, this will be equally ineffective and will die a natural death, making it imperative for the Government to invent a deadlier one. Dharasana will have achieved a great deal only if it can drive the fear of the lathi and other atrocities



Two Members of the War Council who were severely beaten on the day of the last raid. Sjts. Dinkar Mehta and Shivabhai Patel.



A devout Ashramite and a Member of the War-Council —Sjt. Raojibhai Patel—who had a very severe thrashing on the 6th June.





The Punchmahal leader Sjt. Marutising Thakore who was very seriously wounded on 6th June.



Sjt. Kanti Parekh, the Redoubtable Captain of the Ant Camp who participated in the raid of the 6th June and was seriously wounded.

out of the minds of our people. People are inviting the Government to use and exhaust all the weapons of tortures that its armoury contains. If we give sacrifice enough to satiate their thirst for terrorism that is to-day rampant in the land, we shall easily and very soon baffle the satan in man. Dharasana is yet beginning. Those who think the Government has gone too far are surely mistaken in their estimate. When it will have exhausted all its means and when it will be convinced of their futility against a determined and non-violent people, it will immediately come on its knees. That is the result, the culmination of a non-violent war. There can be no half-way house.

Dharasana may not just bring the desired end. In that case we shall have to thread up the link where we leave Dharasana. The Government has already given us ample opportunity and scope by the promulgation of new ordinances. Lathi will be carried into every street and home. The country is even to-day a vast prison—house. Soon will it be a vast Dharasana and even worse. And the sooner the day comes, the better for us. May God give us the strength to stand that ordeal. That will be the birth—pangs of a new-born, free India. Let us hatch the embryo and the glorious day will soon dawn.

Gujarat has done wonderfully well. Its response is equally marvellous. Gujaratis who were regarded too weak and timid even for pin-picks have displayed

Dharasana a marvellous spirit of heroism that the world had rare occasions to witness. Strong, able-bodied, intelligent youths silently and peacefully suffered all imaginable forms of torture for the sake of their country. Hundreds of villages of Gujarat sent to Dharasana some of their noblest and most intelligent sons as an oblation into the great sacrifice that was

going on at Dharasana. And all this in the sacred name of God, Country and Bapu whose spirit is wonderfully pervading the whole nation, though his frail figure is possessed by the worshippers of the body and the matter. If we have faith in God, shall we be impatient? Will He not convert and melt the heart of the oppressor? The whole fight is based upon an undying faith that He shall.

## Independent Opinions on Dharasana Atrocities

### **'Exemplary Behaviour of the Police'**

Shri Miraben, (Miss Slade) after her visit to Bulsar has contributed a very outspoken article to the columns of Young India on the 'most devilish, cold-blooded and unjustifiable affair in the history of nations' which is reproduced below:—

During these days when the authorities in Whitehall and Simla are never tired of extolling the behaviour of the police, I thought I would go and see for myself how this exemplary behaviour has affected the Satyagrahis at Dharasana.

I reached Bulsar at mid-day on 6th, just as the wounded were being brought in there from the 'raid' of that morning. Many of them were being carried in on stretchers, others could just struggle from the motors to the hospital wards.

'The beating and torturing has been most merciless to-day!' said the doctors and attendants. I proceeded round the rooms to visit the Satyagrahis more closely, and to take notes from the doctor as to the nature of their wounds.

Literally I felt my skin to creep and my hair to stand on end as I saw those brave men, who, but a few hours previously, had gone forth absolutely unarmed, vowed to non-violence, now lying here before me battered and beaten from head to foot.

Here was a young man with his shoulders and buttocks so beaten that he could not be on his back, yet his arms and sides were so damaged as well, that he did not know how to turn for rest. There was another gasping for breath with his chest badly battered; and nearby was a tall, strong, Musalman lying utterly helpless.

‘What are his damages?’ I asked.

‘He has received fearful blows on the stomach, the back and right leg,’ they replied. ‘Also his testicles are both swollen having been badly squeezed by the police.’

We went on upstairs.—here my attention was attracted by the sound of sharp drawn whistling breathing, intermixed with heart-rending groans. It was a young man writhing in agony. He kept catching at his stomach, and at intervals he would suddenly sit up as if he were going to go mad with the pain.

‘He has had a deadly blow right on the abdomen,’ they said; ‘and he has been vomiting blood. He has also had his testicles severely squeezed, which has shattered his nerves.’

They fetched ice, and applied it to the head and damaged parts, which gradually soothed him.

And on we went from this house to another, where we found still more and more wounded.

Everyone to whom I talked gave the same description of fiendish beating, torturing, thrusting and dragging, and one and all spoke with burning horror of the foul abuse and unspeakable blasphemy which the police and their Indian and English superiors had poured upon them.

So this is some of the exemplary behaviour of the police, of which the English lords and gentlemen are so proud. Do they not know what is going on? No, that surely cannot be, for such high-placed English officials as the Commissioner N. D. and the Collector of Surat have been all along on field of action.

What, then, has become of English honour, English justice?

No amount of argument can excuse what they have been doing at Dharasana.

The object of the Satyagrahis has been a civil breach of the Salt Laws (which are universally admitted to be unjust). The Satyagrahis were ready to accept unresistingly the legal punishment of arrest and imprisonment, but the authorities thought it preferable to employ other methods. Then, on 22nd May, perhaps to try and lend a shade of legality to their actions, the authorities brought into force Section 144, making any gathering of more than four persons an unlawful assembly.

With this emergency law in force, it might be argued by the official world, that it is justifiable to try and disperse a collection of people by *lathi* charges, if they refuse to go away when ordered, even though the individuals are absolutely non-violent, and known not to be going to hurt a single person.

That much brutal argument one might understand from their point of view.

But nothing could excuse the manner in which they have actually dealt with the Satyagrahis.

Who could dare to uphold as a means of dispersing a non-violent gathering:

1. *lathi* blows on head, chest, stomach, joints;
2. Thrusts with *lathis* in private parts, abdominal regions, chest etc.

3. Stripping of men naked before beating;
4. Tearing off of loin-cloth and thrusting of stick into *anus*;
5. Pressing and squeezing of the testicles till a man becomes unconscious;
6. Dragging of wounded men by legs or arms, often beating them the while;
7. Throwing of wounded men into thorn hedges or into salt water;
8. Riding of horses over men as they lie or sit on the ground;
9. Thrusting of pins and thorns into men's bodies, sometimes even when they are unconscious; and
10. Beating of men after they had become unconscious?

And other vile things too many to relate, besides foul language and blasphemy, calculated to hurt as much as possible, the most sacred feelings of the Satyagrahis

The whole affair is one of the most devilish, cold-blooded and unjustifiable in the history of nations.

India has now realised the true nature of the British Raj, and with that realisation, the Raj is doomed.

### **Mrs. Gandhi on Ghastly Dharasana Scenes**

Mrs. Kasturbai Gandhi visited the wounded Volunteers in the hospital.

Interviewed, she said: "I visited the hospitals to see the wounded and was deeply touched by the ghastly sight of many wounded lying in bed. Tears dropped from my eyes. I was shocked to hear about the excesses perpetrated by the Police. Good will one day take account of these excesses. But I must admit that in spite of the pain caused, my heart rejoiced at the bravery and patriotic fervour displayed by the lads even while suffering untold miseries. It was suffering for a right cause, for which parallel could only be found in the suffering of Harishchandra who suffered for the sake of truth.

I am also delighted that so many doctors and sisters of mercy are nursing the wounded. They deserve all credit. Similar tales of suffering come from all sides. It is all the more the reason why this system of Government must now be ended!"

My countrymen who have heard of Dharasana's harrowing tales, will, I hope, work with greater vigour for the no-tax campaign and picketing liquor and foreign cloth shops in open defiance of the Viceroy's new Ordinances. I am determined to carry on the mission of prohibition in the face of repression, come what may."

### **Doctors' Report**

The following bulletin is issued by Dr. Bhaskarrao Patel, M. D., in charge of the Congress Committee's hospital where wounded volunteers were being treated:—

"The first batch of 23 wounded volunteers were brought at 2 p. m. to-day. Since then till this report is being written, volunteers are being brought in Ambulance cars and on stretchers. So far 60 of them have been admitted to the Hospital. It is reported to me that more than thirty volunteers who are more severely wounded are still lying at Untadi Camp.

Those, admitted present a peculiar picture of various injuries. There is one with a distinct swelling of the scrotum, which is very painful. Some are run over by horses and lathi blows received from mounted police. Several complain abdominal pain as they have got blows and kicks on that part of the body. This silent beating has caused the volunteers more suffering than open lathi blows. Several volunteers have bruises on various parts of the body due to being dragged out. Some of them, have actual thorns picked into their bodies.

(Sd.) BHASKAR PATEL, M. D.



Dr. Bhaskar Patel's rejoinder to Mr. Garrett's apologia of having used the minimum force.

With reference to the comments appearing in the 'Daily Mail' of to-day, under the signature of 'Scrutator' in connection with the denial by Mr. Garrett of trampling Satyagrahis under horses' feet at Dharasana. Dr. Bhaskar Rao Patel, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, Bulsar Satyagraha Hospital, and Dr. Bhogilal P. Shah of Ahmedabad on duty at field with the Redcross batch, when interviewed by our representative, said space under:

On the 31st May, 1st and 3rd June, the Satyagrahi volunteers were charged by horsemen with lathis. The volunteers were trodden by horses and marks of horse-hoofs were clearly visible when the Patients were admitted in the hospital. Dr. Bhogilal Shah who was present on the field, saw the horses being run on the volunteers and the horsemen mercilessly beating them.

All the cases of injuries inflicted have been fully recorded at the hospital and it can be confidently said that about ten volunteers were severely injured by the horses, while about 25 volunteers had minor injuries by running of horses. Besides this, there are several cases in which severe and merciless beating has taken place. Several were attacked on the chest, abdomen and testicles,

**Sjt. Amritlal V. Thakkar on 'Unclean and Unequal fight.'**

Sjt. Amritlal Thakkar of the Servants of India Society who arrived here this morning, interviewed, said:—

"This does not seem to be a fight of civil resisters with a civilised Government but with a Government which relies in using maximum of force, barring shooting, on people wedded to absolute nonviolence. To-day as I am informed the Commissioner, Mr. Garrett, has added a new force, viz., trampling of Satyagrahis under horses' hoofs

ridden by European sergeants and officers. Wounding of as many as hundred and eleven out of 166 Satyagrahis is a very heavy list of casualties, which means that lathi charge is getting more intensive and disabling. I wonder how long the civilised British Government is going to carry on such an unclean and unequal fight. I saw several wounded in hospital trampled under horses' feet, not to mention lathi blows on the head and other parts of the body. The sight reminded me of the wounded Indian soldiers returned from Mesopotamia in 1917-18 with this difference that none of the Satyagraha soldier had raised a stick nor resisted assault of them."

Mr. Bhulabhai J. Desai, Advocate, the renowned counsel of Bombay paid a visit to Bulsar on the day of the last raid and gave an interview to the press, which is reproduced below:

"I came to Bulsar yesterday and went round the hospitals. The response of the people in rendering every assistance to the wounded Satyagrahis is spontaneous and marvellous. The organisation appears to be almost perfect, both in transporting the wounded from Dharasana and treating them in Bulsar. The doctors in charge are working day and night and everything is done for the treatment and comfort of the wounded.

### **‘ Mercilessly Beaten ’**

The injuries are various both in their variety and quality. The Satyagrahis appear to have been mercilessly beaten on all parts of the body and the police must have pounced upon them and beaten them as if they were thrashing floor. In innumerable cases, internal 'haemorage' is believed to exist and precautions are taken by anti-titanus treatment.

From head to foot no part of the body seems to have been spared in this cruel attack. This treatment is

entirely inhuman. I must have seen at least 150 men in several hospitals. They appear to take these incidents with faith and cheerfulness.

### **Manfully Done Its Duty**

One businessman coming from Cutch and past middle age insisted on joining the raid and referring to his injuries, with Bhagwad Gita in his hands, said most devoutly, 'But what else can we do for Bapu?' Bulsar appears to have done its duty manfully and is thoroughly well-pledged to the Swadeshi movement and boycott of foreign cloth."

### **Three Impartial Judges' unchallengable Verdict**

Mr. Hussain Tyabji, Ex-Judge of the Small Causes Court, Bombay, Mr. K. Natarajan and Mr. G. K. Deodhar, President of the Servants of India Society, have issued a statement to the Associated Press in which they state that they visited Untadi as they heard and read in the papers of many complaints of excessive violence and even brutal lawlessness against volunteers taking part in Dharasana raids, often even against those who were not taking part in them, but were mere spectators.

They went round the hospitals at Untadi and Bulsar maintained by Congress Committees where "all brave volunteers who received injuries are treated by a band of enthusiastic and self-sacrificing patriotic doctors." They discovered that the proportion of wounded and injured was comparatively large though deaths and serious cases of injury were few.

They visited places once occupied by the Satyagrahis such as the camp kitchen at Untadi village which has been confiscated by the Government and has been completely destroyed.

They wanted to see the salt raid and the way it was repulsed. With that object they proceeded to a private field which was at such a distance so as not to be a

hindrance to the authorities and make their presence unobjectionable. That was half a mile away from the Salt Depot itself and at least a furlong from the place where the Satyagrahis were standing.

When they were standing at this place a European gentleman came to them and asked them to return to the village for their own safety.

What that meant could be realised from the subsequent events. They saw the raiders stopped at a great distance from the salt depot and could see how the volunteers were made to stop and were brought back towards Untadi after they had been informed that they were all arrested. One of the complaints repeatedly heard was that after being arrested the volunteers were not led but were beaten with lathis and lathis were poked into their ribs.

It appeared that the volunteers were allowed to proceed some 200 yards inside the boundaries and then ordered to retire and on their refusal they were belaboured with lathis until they reached the boundary and for a considerable distance thereafter. They were then chased by the galloping Sowars by which time most of them had received a very large number of blows.

Subsequent scenes in which a large number of wounded volunteers who were brought on the stretchers, some with injuries in more places than one and some even in an unconscious condition amply supply proof for the complaints that severe injuries were inflicted on the volunteers after they were arrested, if they returned to the raid.

Mr. Waman Mukadam, ex-M. L. C. who led a party was first arrested and was then beaten. They heard of complaints of grossly abusive language and the Satyagrahis felt that keenly.

A still more serious thing was what they saw with their own eyes that after the Satyagrahis were driven out of the salt boundary mounted European Sowars rode at full Gallop with lathis in their hands beating indiscriminately everybody they saw anywhere between the spot where the Satyagrahis had reached for raid and the village itself. They actually galloped at full speed through the streets of the village scattering men, women and children and terrorising them. The villagers ran into the lanes and closed themselves in the houses. But if by accident they were unable to escape they were beaten with lathis.

One man received serious injuries by the galloping of a horse. Another man received lathi blows and his Gandhi cap was forcibly snatched away.

These things were most distressing and they appealed to the authorities to see that these methods of handling Satyagrahis were put a stop to as they were neither necessary nor justifiable.

They further appealed to the authorities to investigate the various other complaints, which, in their opinion, were not at all unfounded and try their best by issuing instructions that all abusive language, rough handling, and charging by the mounted police were abandoned.

" A very serious charge is of scrotum being pressed and using other kinds of force on the vital parts namely the testicles. From the narration of the patients one could safely say that it was deliberately done. In several cases the medical examination showed that either one or both the testicles were swollen and were very tender. Some cases showed distinct bruises but there was no serious swelling of the nature which might be caught by the accidental lathi blows. This is very serious and it seems strange that the higher authorities present at the spot should not know it. "

While thus appealing to the Government not to exasperate the people they would rejoice to see Providence coming to the aid with an early moonsoon, directing the Satyagrahis' efforts in less distressing activities, now that they had amply demonstrated what their determination, courage and devotion to a patriotic cause, coupled with discipline, could achieve.

### **An Ex-Judge on Dharasana**

Mr. Hussein Tayabji, ex-Judge Small Causes Court, Bombay, who was a joint signatory to a statement issued by his companions Messers. Natarajan and Deodhar, issues a separate press note. In view of Mr. Garrett's denial of the trampling down of Satyagrahis by horses, the following interview makes interesting reading:

"I have read a great deal of the way in which the Government was meeting this wide-spread Civil Disobedience campaign, the result of universal discontent in India. The Government found itself face to face with a new form of rebellion. If it was a benevolent Government it would read the mind of the people, and being in existence to serve the people would have attempted to serve them as they wished.

The Government being not for that purpose, but merely to govern, their one object was to crush the National campaign. To adopt the standard of pure humanity or pure philosophy should be nonsense in the case of a small nation which is in possession of a continent of an entirely different race, six thousands miles away. But some form of legality which they expect from the nation might in reason be expected from themselves.

In attempting to observe the law in reason some degree of the breach of the law, some illegality unintended, some excess might be permitted. But from day to day gross abuse of the law, justification for which was merely

the end,—the end of suppressing, crushing down brutally. I heard on Sunday from the mouth of a respectable man whom I knew to be worthy of credit that he had gone to Dharasana to see the raid of the Satyagrahis and that though he was far out of the Salt-pan boundaries,, he was charged by a mounted European at full gallop, and the rearing horse would have killed us, but he escaped miraculously and was then chased until he succeeded in getting the protection of a bush of babool.

I was sceptical of the news of such a character, which though it may be true in the substance may have explanatory circumstances. As suggested some trustworthy men went and saw the campaign with their own eyes, and afterwards asked me if I would go with men like Sir Purushottamdas, Mr. Valchand Hirachand and Mr. Natarajan. I consented. I regret they were unable from indisposition to come and ultimately our party consisted of Mr. Natarajan, Mr. Deodhar and myself.

We arrived at Untadi village early in the morning on June 3, King's birthday. We saw the old Satyagrahi Camp, now burnt down, and then saw the batch of volunteers under Bai Maniben Patel.

They set out for their non-violent raid without any weapons or sticks, shouting out prayers. We followed some distance behind them. From Untadi village with a population of some 1,900 people and a few well-built houses the Salt Pans of the village of Dharasana are perhaps half-a-mile. It took us some 15 minutes to walk there. As I was not a Satyagrahi I was dressed in a black Astrakhan Mussalman cap and my usual angarkha and I desired to post myself far away from the Satyagrahis and even the Red-cross corps of volunteers who had posted themselves right out of the outskirts of the area of the Salt Depot.

I inquired where the boundary of the depot was. Being pointed out the babool thorn hedge, I stood on an earthen mound, a furlong or so from the Satyagrahi raiders. Soon after a European, Mr. Jewel I am told, with a couple of other Indian officials came to us and asked me who I was. I gave him my name and designation and he said, "Well Mr. Taiyabji, I must ask you to leave this place and get away as far as possible, as this is a dangerous place." I said I did not wish to trespass the salt depot area and was merely a spectator and would like to be outside the boundary and asked him where I could stand. He said, "Get away to the village of Untadi, for your own sake, this is all a dangerous place."

To further questions he merely said he could not discuss, all he could say was that I should find my way into the village. I understood that I might be beaten anywhere and I would only be safe in Untadi. I learnt the first batch of Satyagrahis was arrested and all were marched down to a place close to Untadi and then all were allowed to go, save one Waman, the leader.

### **Waman III-Treated**

This man was merely arrested but after arrest I saw him brought on a stretcher by Satyagrahi volunteers, and I went and saw him in the hospital of the Satyagrahis hardly able to speak. He said he was badly beaten and maltreated in various ways. Soon after we heard a bugle and I saw two horsemen galloping down with thick long sticks 1-1/2"—2" in diameter charging all people in the fields between the extreme end of the salt depot and the village.

I saw them beat several people and I saw these brought on stretchers by the Styagrahis and some returning with the aid of others. They passed through the village past the house I was in and I saw them threatening everybody



in the village with these dangerous sticks, men, women and children in the streets rushed on the verandahs, but they were not safe even here and one man was trampled under horse's feet immediately opposite to the hospital in the middle of the village and is at present lying unconscious.

### **Injuries on Dharasana Satyagrahis**

Mr. B. F. Bharucha, who visited the Hospital at Bulsar and Untadi, says in a statement to the Press:—

“I was shocked to see blows and injuries inflicted on Satyagrahis at Dharasana. Even private parts were injured. Drs. Bhaskerrao Patel and H. M. Joshi are attending upon the injured with Mr. Lalubhai Javeri and other assisting. I have seen Mr. Manilal at Untadi and also Mr. Chhaganlal Joshi. They are full of spirit. For running hospitals and sending Satyagrahis to their homes, Rs. 3,000 is urgently required. Bombayites please remit the sum to Miss Maniben Vallabhbhai Patel, Bulsar—Free Press.

### **Unmentionable Deeds Perpetrated**

Mr. Hussein B. Taiyabji's spirited Rejoinder.

The following statement has been issued by Mr. Hoosein B. Taiyabji regarding the Government Communique on Dharasana raids:—

I am asked to make a statement in reply to the Press Note issued by the Director of Information on Tuesday last which appeared in papers on Thursday the 12th instant relating to the atrocities at Dharasana. I must at the outset express gratification that the authorities have not ignored our complaints and have at least condescended to notice them. After a very careful perusal I regret I have to come to the conclusion that is based upon the principle of accepting official statements without any scrutiny, biassed and, therefore, worthless.



The Valiant Satyagrahi Sgt. Himatlal Dave who  
successfully pulled out barbed wire, and  
had his head broken.



Three Volunteers lying unconscious in Bulsar  
Congress Hospital.

(Untadi) and a large number besides these 300 were at Billimora (see statement by Dr. Bhaskar Patel. M. D., of Freiburg). What comment need be made upon judgment most strongly based on such a fact! I appeal to Government in dealing with the grievances of the subjects against their officials however high, to be judicial and just and not to act unduly and improperly with an 'esprit de corps' of the service and supporting their brother officials to the despair of the subject. Is the case we presented shattered? Is it affected in the least? I think it is corroborated. Let me examine it.

We went to see the raid, to a place midway between the village of Untadi and the Salt Depot which is a mile away. We stood a furlong away from the peaceful demonstrators, the Satyagrahis pledged to non-violence who went as martyrs without stick or weapons, to suffer. We were advised by the officials whom we charge with excesses, to get away from there as it was not safe. Why not safe for us? Why should they make it unsafe for us? We charge them for having made it unsafe for us. What justification for taking such step against the Satyagrahis that the place anywhere for a mile around should be unsafe? Unsafe in the streets of the Untadi village too! I sit not a conclusive proof that there was excess as to violence used in resisting the peaceful raiders, excess as to the area to which the violence was spread, and excess as to the class of people against whom it could be justified! But we said we saw with our own eyes mounted European Sowars dashing at full gallop through the streets with sticks one and a half to two inches thick and one man was beaten and another run over sustaining very serious injuries. I also saw several men chased in the field and beaten. If any one denies these deadly sticks in the hands of the Sowars on the 3rd of June, I say it is untrue. I saw them myself. How does the Press Note,

excepting the version of the accused, meet our accusation? The Press Note makes no mention of the Sowars on 3rd of June at all but says "as to the 31st of May the Deputy Inspector General of Police suggested to the Corporal that he might take his men round the maidan in order to see whether the volunteers would thus be dissuaded from attacking. This was done. A party of volunteers was then seen advancing on the Nava Zilla and the Corporal and his 4 men went to cut them off. Some half a dozen of the attackers (i. e., the unarmed defenceless Satyagrahis) got into the Salt Pans where they were easily caught, but the remainder on seeing the horses, turned tail and fled with horses running after them. The whole affair was over within a few minutes. And no casualties whatsoever resulted as the mounted sawar did not get into contact with volunteers nor had they any stick or other weapons in their hands.' This purports to explain the presence of horses on the 31st of May. Not the 3rd of June. Perhaps by the 3rd of June the desire to "dissuade" the Satyagrahis had become stronger, and their love "to exercise their horses and satisfy their natural curiosity" more passionate.

So if Mr. Devadhar, Mr. Natarajan and myself had stayed in the field or happened to be even in the streets of Untadi we might have been "dissuaded" in the above fashion, and if we had proved good runners and were not trampled and had complained we would have had the reply, "Well, what harm. No casualty whatsoever—excellent to have a little run in the morning," but if we had bad luck and were run over, the reply would have been "Oh only three of you, look at the good it does to the country!" I have reason to believe that "the sum total of the dreadful charge" is not nil, but a large number of cases with marks of hoofs. My appeal to the Central Powers, not the high inter-mediaries I accuse, is,

“Does it do good to the country? You may terrorise the village of 1,900 people, the effect spreads throughout the vast continent, till men living in marble palaces say they will court anarchy and destruction rather than torture their conscience and support such a Government.’

As to the beating after arrest, and beating outside the boundaries of the salt depot, we were not allowed to be the spectators, but we saw Mr. Waman Mukadam, ex-M. L. C. brought on a stretcher, badly shaken, who said he was arrested, then taken to a small cabin, handed over to the mercies of some policemen, struck with lathis, insulted, abused and then let go.

As to the atrocities in general, volunteers beaten unconscious with lathis, their bodies dragged along the ground, pierced with thorns and flung into ditches, unmentionable deeds upon them, testicles squeezed, lathis rammed from behind, preceded by abusive language indicating what was intended to be performed, trampling by mounted European officers, causing hoof marks, these and others it was not our purpose to substantiate and prove in the short joint statement we issued. It is sufficient to say that we saw three hospitals full of the wounded and the medical men in charge and interviewed them and I am of opinion they raise a strong case for the allegations made. Whatever might be the “light” side, it must be clear as day-light that a number of these Satyagrahis pledged to non-violence and offering themselves for suffering for the love of their country are livened by a new spirit altogether and ennobled by that spirit, whatever they might have been, are worthy of credit, not to be despised even against the day to day record or even the testimony of interested officials, however high.

I hope I have proved that in the interest of the Government it is worthwhile revising the judgment and bringing to account the officials concerned, in time.

An Official Rejoinder of the Publicity Officer, Satyagraha Camp, Bulsar, to the flippant and inaccurate ocmunique of the Director of Information.

### **More Lies the Government Lies Factory**

'Considerable prominence given in the Press accoutts describing atrocities' at Dharasana seems to have awfully perturbed the peace of mind of Messrs. Garrett, Braham & Co. and the Director of Information, rightly called the "Director of Misinformation" by the public has been made to hurl at the public a few more untruths. Lies have often emanated from this Government lies factory, the Directoa's office, but never were they more glaring than in this case. The Director of Information seems to have a very easy concience and does not flinch in distorting facts and coining utter falsehoods at the bidding of his masters who in the present case are Messrs Garrett, Braham, Antia & Co.

The Director, past master as he is in distortion of facts, tries to minimise the nature of atrocities perpetrated at Dharasana by denying the use of lathis on unconcious Satyagrahis, piercing of thorns, flinging into ditches and charging them with cavalry. Mr. Garrett, the Commissioner of Northern Division also tried the other day to show that minimum force was used to disperse the crowds. These untruths and half-truths ordinarily ought to be treated with the righteous indignation they deserve and ignored. However, in order that the public should be in possession of true facts and in a position to judge for themselves as to whom they should believe and whom not, certain refutations are necessary to be made here.

Statements made by unbiassed and disinterested publicmen like Sjt. Natrajan, Tyabji, Deodhar & Thakkar whose integrity of purpose, it would be a veture even for the Director to doubt, have naturally called for this lame attempt on the part of the Director to defend the Govornment position and save the facts of the officials involved. Regarding the charge of vagueness in the statement made by Mr. Tyabji & party, it is not for me to say anything as they are quite competent to defend their position and I learn that they are preparing another statement in reply to the flippant and inaccurate communique of the Director. However, I would emphatically assert in contradiction of the official version, that mounted horses did trample the Satyagrahis and also the pedestrians. There is sufficient evidence on our record and on records of the Congress Hospitals to show that injuries as a result of charging by mounted Sowars were in no way less serious. The Director tries to ridicule Messrs. Natrajan, Tyabji & Deodhur by asking as to what was the damage done by the "dreadful charge" and by saying that its effects would have been more serious if such a charge had been carried out. The fallacy behind this logic is apparent. The Director may well afford to fling a ridicule at such respectable men under a Government that handsomely pays him to do so, but there, only one man receiving the serious injury or another receiving lathi blows & loseing his Gandhi Cap does in no way lessen the 'dreadfulness, of the charge ! Did the the Director want that the charge should have wounded a few hundred people to have made it really dreadful ? That mounted Sowars, one wild — looking Sergeant with blood thirsty eyes, and another a Pathan, apart from their trampling Satyagrahis did ride at full gallop through the streets of Untadi, beat everbody indiscriminately, and terrorise paaceful citizens, women and children included was sufficient to make it enough dreadful. Not one or two

but a few hundred people of Untadi can testify to the wild nature of the charge. Not only one man was injured but people who had been to their fields for answering the call of nature were also beaten, that children running about in frightfulness received injuries and several more citizens were hurt. But how can one blame the Director for these inaccuracies as he has got to see through the glasses of Shriyut Antia and men of his ilk, whose interest it is to hide their doings behind the veil of secrecy? The Director only is a tool who sends out stuff supplied by these props of the Government, and one who knows how these official reports are being manufactured, need hardly bother himself about the Commissioner's report referred to by the Director in his communique. It is generally meant for consumption in Mahabaleshwar & Simla. Medical evidence on this point is clear and Dr. Sathye of Bombay has supported it in unequivocal terms and challenged the Director to prove that injuries were not serious. He is in possession of X-ray photographs of the patients with hoof marks. The patient with thorns pierced into his body was, I remember, removed to Bombay and was being treated at Sir Harkishandas Hospital. The records of the said Hospital can say with authenticity the truth about the case. Regarding the flinging into ditches, the victims of the torture have made statements, emphatically asserting the fact and these Satyagrahis are more truthful than and in any case as honourable if not more, as the perpetrators of the inhuman act who have been the source of inspiration to Mr. Clee. He is conveniently silent on charges against the police of having molested the Satyagrahis by squeezing their private parts and poking lathis into the anus.

In connection with the Officials' so-called visit to the Congress Hospital. Dr. Bhasker Patel, M. D., Chief Medical Officer of the Congress Hospital has amply exposed the myth about the said visit and I need hardly add anything to it.



The other two points in the Director's Statements that need a little enlightenment are those regarding Mr. Waman Mukadam and the Red-Cross people. It is very unfair on the part of the Director to have hit Mr. Mukadam on the back, though very convenient, no doubt, to say anything about him while he is behind the prison bars. The statement of Mr. Mukadam made immediately after his removal to the Hospital is before the public. Messrs. Deodhar, Natrajan & Tyabji visited him in Untadi Hospital and Mr. Mukadam repeated to them what he had stated a little earlier. Mr. Antia the "Hero of Dharasana" on the third day of the incident told Miss Maniben, Patel that Mr Mukadam was not arrested, and was not beaten he himself have led the batch but for the coercion by the Satyagrahis. Mr. Antia cannot also deny his having repeated the same story to the A. P. Representative. When the news came to us I saw Mr. Mukadam in the Hospital to ascertain the fact when he emphatically said that what he had stated priviously was true to a word and it was a malicious lie and a libel to say that he was not arrested, was not beaten, or that he had agreed to leave by the noon train. I have his authority to say that in reply to his question to the European Officer whether he or all were arrested, the said officer repeated "all all" with as much emphasis as he commanded, also that it was the Officer who said that if he (Mukadam) would not leave for Godhra by the train mentioned he would bitterly be hammered. Mr. Mukadam also refutes the charge of "having denied the leadership" or having said the he had come there under coercion. Under the circumstances I rather prefer to leave it to the public to judge whether they ought to rely on the words of a man of Mr. Mukadam's integrity and honour or on those of a Government Officer whose business it is to mutilate facts & paint them in wrong colours.

I also know Mr. Antia always made a grievance that the Red Cross people were all volunteers but it passes one's comprehension as to what else could they be? Even the Red-Cross people in the sense Mr. Antia understands them are in a way Volunteers. But apart from that it was in no way wrong for the volunteers to carry out the little humanitarian work for their wounded brethren. Who else if not these Volunteers would carry them to hospitals when the officials' work ended with thrashing them mercilessly and throwing them near and also into the thorn fences?—That the Red-Cross people remained, as long as they had Red-Cross on them, non-combatants and did not participate in the fight, the Government had no reason to make any grievance. On the day they went there as combatants, none of them has sought the shelter of privileges accorded to the Red-Cross. There is another reference in the communique that requires a little mention here. The communique says that a publicity agent was seen wearing a Red-Cross. I know whom the reference is made to. It was no sin on the part of the said publicity agent to do a good turn to the wounded simply because he was a publicity agent. He did not cease to be an Indian because he incidentally happened to be a journalist. It was enough that on the day he was seen on the field, he carried out his work as a Red-Cross man and did not function as a journalist. Those who have followed the controversy in the press regarding the Red-Cross must have been convinced that in this unfortunate country there was no go for the Satyagrahi Volunteers but to work as Red-Cross people to help the wounded. It may be also mentioned by the way that the number of Red-Cross attendants was in no way large, looking to the number of casualties resulting from the merciless beating. It took more than two hours even for "this large number" to remove the wounded from the field, on the last day.

I wish the Director had fully ascertained himself about his facts before trying to shelter the officials under the mask of what he calls a true version and thus mislead the public. The public will, no doubt, judge for themselves.

### **What the Doctors' Say**

the following is a statement submitted by the twelve medical practitioners who examined and treated the volunteers wounded during the five raids on Dharasana Salt Depots from 29th May to the 8th of June 1930, at the Untadi Field Hospital and the Bulsar Satyagraha Hospital, concerning the various kinds of injuries inflicted on non-violent volunteers :

"The volunteers who went on raids were surrounded by the police Cordon and were beaten with *lathis*. During the second series of raids, commenced from 29th May 1930, in addition to those of the 30th, 31st, May, and 1st, 3rd, and the 6th of June 1930, in addition to the methods employed in the previous raids new forms of attack were introduced, *viz.*,

1. Running of horses on the batches of volunteers.
2. Squeezing the testicles.
3. Hailing *lathi* blows on the chest and the abdomen.

"Out of about 797 volunteers sent out for raids during these days, about 450 of the injured volunteers had to be treated at the Bulsar Satyagraha Hospital. We give below the analysis of the different types of the injuries recorded;

Injuries on head	27
"    "    face, eye, ear,	16
"    "    neck	12

Injuries on shoulder, arm.	216
"    "    chest,	73
"    "    abdomen	57
"    "    back	229
"    "    thigh, leg	193
"    "    Scrotum	21
Cases of Fractures	15
"    "    Dislocations,	10
Injuries on from horses' hoofs	25
"    "    Renderd unconscious	40

"In addition to the above injuries we beg to add that there was a case of vomitting of blood, some four cases who got convlsions, there were a few who could not pass urine for more than 24 hours because they had got blows on the abdomen, to some it was very difficult to breathe due to blows on the chests.

"Almost all who got severe beating got temperature ranging from 100 to 102 degrees. There were two cases who were unable to speak though they were fully conscious.

"It is especially necessary to record here that on the raid many got severe injuries. Hardly anyone of the sturdy non-violent volunteers were left off without bearing at least fifteen to twenty *lathi* blows all over the body.

"Looking to the nature of the injuries cited above and several others caused by *lathi* blows on different parts of the body we leave to the Medical World and general public to judge whether such injuries could ever be caused by the minimum force which the Government claims to have employed.

## Signatures of the Doctors:

Dr. Bhaskarrao Patel, M. D.,	Bombay
„ Paragji D. Bulsarkar,	Bulsar
„ Surajlal H. Parekh,	Bulsar
„ Naval M. Vohra,	Bulsar
„ Harikrishna Joshi,	Palanpur
„ Sindhe,	Palanpur
„ Mukundrai Joshi,	Palanpur
„ Mukund,	Ahmedabad
„ N. D. Desai,	Bulsar
„ Bhogilal Shah,	Ahmedabad
„ Popatlal,	Bilimora
„ Khandubhai Desai,	Navsari

## “The Black Regime”

A few samples of the accounts given several authentic depositions from Viramgam.

“Women came out after giving the men water and began to move out slowly. Then came dazzling lights of a motor car on them and about twenty mounted police rushed in and ran their horses among them beating them with *lathis* and saying, ‘Beat them, beat them.’ One woman with a child was running, and in so doing she dropped the child. She cried out that her child had fallen down. At this time the mounted police were running their horses and were freely using *lathis*. I was at that time very near, so I ran to rescue the child and to hand the child over to her, but she in fright had run away. As I lifted up the child one mounted policeman gave me a *lathi* blow on my right hand . . . This child was about four months old.’ ”

“The men in the motorcar were shouting ‘Beat them, Beat them’. The police were shouting obscene abuses. They took me beating all along from the railway gate. I was given a thrust with the end of the bayonet near the gate. I ran from that place but the *sowar* charged his horse

on me. I was beaten again with a stick. I was beaten on my right leg by both the stick and the bayonet. . . . The signs of the beating are still showing."

"A strong blow was given to her leg with a stick. Mr. Gholap ordered out beating. I know Mr. Gholap. The police used obscene language without restraint."

"A horse came rushing towards me. His fore legs fell on my outer garment which bears the marks of the hoofs of the horses.

"I fell down on my back. I was thereby separated from the other women.

"The policemen were standing near the city gate. Police *sowars* were taking rounds. I therefore passed through the policemen. One of these three gave a thrust with a stick on my back. I therefore ran. While passing the Excise station near the *limbdi*, a policeman rushed at me. He caught me by the side in his arms and threw me down. I fell down face downwards. He sat on my body and harrassed me physically a good deal. He also tore off my bodice on the back and there are still signs of nail scratches on the back and the left hand. He caught hold of my right hand. Blood has collected on it.

"Other women in the meanwhile came up and he got up and ran away."

Almost all the accounts indicate Mr. Gholap I. C. S. as the Evil Genius of this affair. One wonders if the 'heavenborn service' does not include one who has escaped from the sulphurous

fumes below. If that cadre had any honour left, Mr. Gholap has done his best to wipe out any vestige of it. It is time we melted down this 'steel frame' for scrap-iron. (*Young India*, 29-5-30)

### **Viramgam Outrages**

This is what Dr. Narsinhbhai Mehta, a retired Chief Medical Officer of Junagadh, who at the age of 66, was enthused with the spirit of Satyagraha, saw with his own eyes :

"I brought a party of about 120 Satyagrahis, each with a bag of ten lbs. of contraband salt from Wadhvan Camp this evening.

"As I led the party, I was the first to meet the inspecting party consisting of one European officer, two Indian officers and about 4 or 5 police constables. Over and above this there were about fifty spare constables watching the entrance of the staircase.

"I was asked what I had got in the bag under my armpit. I replied, 'Ten lbs. of contraband salt.' 'Alright, old doctor, you can go,' they said. I said, "I am leading a party of about 120 Satyagrahis, each with a bag of such salt. So I want to see personally how you deal with them, or whether you allow them to go freely just like other passengers.' He said, 'Alright, you stand apart on one side, and watch.' One by one the Satyagrahis were made to pass through the said inspecting party and immediately all the seven or eight of them, including the European officer, caught hold of each and snatched the bag from the hands of the Satyagrahi, handling the resister most roughly. Almost every Satyagrahi was treated likewise. It was a disgraceful proceeding. I had a very high opinion of Englishmen all throughout my life. This was the first experience of the kind during sixty-six



"When I could bear the treatment no longer and expostulated, the officer said: 'Speak to the public outside about this and write to the papers!' And the whole performance went on as before."

*Statement of Aniruddha Vyas, a student of Dakshinamurti Vidyarthi Bhuvan.—*

"I with a number of my companions got down from the 6-30 evening mail with bags of salt at the Viramgam railway station, when from 8 to 10 policemen surrounded us. To save the salt from being seized I sat down with the bag of salt on the ground, clinging to it with all my might.

"All efforts of the police to make me get up having failed, one of them thrust apart my legs and squeezed my private parts with his hands so as to compel me to get up. But the weight of my body and the push and the pull of the surrounding police disengaged the parts and I fell down. I was then pulled up again. But I bent double and held the salt bag tight under my crossed arms. A policeman thereupon straightened my back by poking it with his foot which caused me intense pain. Then two policemen gave a violent jerk, twisted my fingers as they liked and loosened my arms and wrested the bag from me. I was then let go, one officer taking my name and number."

### **Black Regime at Dharasana**

Below are given some statements recorded in the hospital at Bulsar.

*Statement of Sjt. Abdullah Sheth.*

The venerable old Captain of Ville Parle Batch. 29-5-30.

I with 75 volunteers with me thrice attempted to raid the Salt Depot at Dharasna as against the promulgation of 144 and received severe beating. I was also dragged on the ground and had severe promises. However, as

soon I am alright, I mean to go back to join the raid. In spite of the demolition of the Camp, some 400 valient Satyagrahis are awaiting the General's orders to raid the Salt Depots.     ×     ×     It is true we keep with us a wire cutter but then it is in no way contradictory to the laws of Satyagraha. We cannot break the animate cordon or use force against a human soul but we can by all means break an inanimate cordon. The masses are pining for independence and our non-violent struggle will no doubt achieve it.

I, Himatlal T. Dave, volunteer No. 1688, Captain of Sjt. Balvantrai's Batch state that I with nine volunteers of my batch in company with others marched towards Dhara-sana. The police being unprepared it was not difficult for me to reach near the barbed wire fencing. I caught hold of a wire and pulled it out, but a European Officer just then gave me a severe blow on my hand. It smashed my palm. The pointed end of the wire pierced into my palm. At the same time came from behind a severe blow on my head and it struck me on the region above forehead, but my hair protected me a little. I however, bled profusely and my handkerchief was all soaked in blood. My comrades also tied bandages with their handkerchiefs but bleeding did not stop. I at last reeled and became unconscious. I don't know what happened afterwards. I later on learnt that a few police dragged me towards the fence, kicking me all the way with their heavy shoes, and left me there. Mr. Subawala was present and it was he who on seeing me bleed heavily called for Red Cross people none of whom was present and had consequently to get me removed by police.

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Statement of Mulchand Mavji, Volunteer No. 1677, Ahmedabad.

started with Sjt. Balubhai's batch for Dharasna on 26th May; Sjt. Balubhai was arrested and we were made

to walk a distance of nearly 16 miles. I demanded my shoes but was not given the same. I tied my Langot but even then my feet had boils on them.

Next day I joined another batch. The Police was not ready for our raid. They were in plain clothes. They blew the bugles but we had already reached near the fence.

I pulled out a wire and with the help of another, jumped over the fence. There was a cordon inside but the Police had no weapon and hence they began giving me kicks. When I doggedly refused to budge an inch, four of them threw me down and one of them took out my Langot and bitterly pressed my testicles. I began to foam. I gave a shriek and became senseless. I regained consciousness after three hours when I realised that they had given me lathi blows while I was senseless.

My one hand and one leg are dislocated as a result of lathi blows and throwing me. The secret parts are also paining very much.

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I, Patel Chhotabhai Jesingbhai of Oad (Anand) volunteer of Kaira batch No. 1 started for Dharasna on the morning of 30-5-30. After removing the Captain aside the officers ordered us to disperse. On our refusing to do so, I was given a blow on my back and I reeled down to the ground. Two policemen caught me by hand and two by legs and dragged me. The European officer again gave three blows with his heavy lathi with a iron knot at the end. This injured my lips which bled for long. I was also beaten on the throat. Then I was thrown in a senseless condition into a thorny fence where from I was taken to the camp when I regained my consciousness.

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Dayabbhai Bhailalbhai of the Surat batch No. 2 states—  
We reached the barbed wire fence. Bhikhubhai pulled the wire. In the meanwhile, a European officer gave him a blow on hand and fractured it, then broke his head and

he fell down. Then he gave me a blow on one of my legs which bled as a result thereof. The officer then ordered us to be removed and policemen in their turn gave me three blows and threw me at a distance.

Manilal T. Patel of Gujarat College volunteer No. 1776 states:—

I joined the raiding party on 31-5-30. The police cordon blocked our way about two furlongs away from the barbed wire fencing. On our refusing to disperse, lathi charge was begun. I received two blows on my left hand one on my right and one on the back. I fell down. They dragged me by my shorts. All this time gross abuse was lavished on us. At last they tore the shorts and removed the underwear and began giving blows on the buttocks. I tried to protect the parts with hands, so they turned me up on back and gave blows on the face. I covered my secret part and I was again forcibly turned back and given blows on buttocks again. My underwear (Langot) was entirely torn. Then they dragged me to a distance, on the way too I had a little additional beating.

Dinkarra P. Oza Of Ville Parle Batch states:—

I am the Captain of the Maharashtra batch. We were amongst the raiders of Salt Depot on 31-6-30. Besides the lathi blows, horses were run over us and we were thrown into thorny fences. A horse-hoof injured my private part and consequently I was rendered senseless. Many thorns have pierced into my right leg and other parts of the body. Lathi blows were given at several places and gave me severe pain all over.

Sjt. Chhotabhai Maganbhai, Volunteer No. 78, Batch No. 38, of Changa village Kaira District, says in his statement:—

On 31-5-30 one batch reached Dharasana at about 10 a. m. Lathi blows greeted us on the way. Two officers dragged me to a distance. They caught hold of my private

parts. My brain began to reel, and I became quite unconscious. Afterwards when I regained a little consciousness, they brought me to a distance all the while beating me.

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I Nanubhai Dhirajlal Zaveri (Broach) a red-cross Volunteer state that I had a red-cross on me and reached the field a little after the volunteers had reached. I was attending to a few wounded Satyagrahis; in the meantime Mr. Antia arrived and gave me a few blows on the head. A European officer also jut then arrived and gave me lathi blows on my face and chin. Both of them beat me with lathi on my right shoulder, right hand and leg. I consequently fell to the ground and was picked up by volunteers.

Statement of Hanumant Holat volunteer No. 61  
Ville Parle batch.

When we raided the Depot in the morning, the Inspector of Police (Alamshah) gave me three lathi blows. In spite of them, I again tried to get up but we were all given a push and thrown into the ditch. \* \* \* About 11 O'clock they hurled me into a dark, unventilated dungeon-like room.

European Sergeant there gave me four or five blows and I was locked up in the room for over two hours. Then I was taken out and was heavily kicked twice, was given blows on the head and was seated under the scorching sun. I consequently fainted. In the evening again I was thrown into the ditch from where I was picked up by the Red-Cross people.

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Jawahir Ragha of Ahmedabad batch states:—

I joined raid on 1-6-30. \* \* \* Horses were run over us and a horse's hoof severely injured my left leg. I was also beaten with lathis while I was lying on the ground, having fallen down by the kick of the horse.

Mathurbhai Patel No. 99 of Kaira states:—

The Police stopped us when we were marching towards the Salt Depot on 1-6-30 \* \* \* They began giving us lathi blows. When I did not get up in spite of the blows they poked lathi into my stomach region, pulled my Dhoti and pressed and pulled my secret organ which rendered me unconscious.

Pritamlal Chandulal Pande No. 1765 of Ahmedabad states:—

\* \* \* A Police Officer came and asked us to clear out within five minutes or else he would "kill" us. When lathi blows did not deter us, a Police gave severe blows on my private parts. Then they dragged me to a distance, where they again came, pulled out pin from my badge and pierced it on my buttocks. I was then dragged again till I lost consciousness.

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Manibhai L. Surti No. 1768 of Ahmedabad states:—

\* \* The officers grossly abused us \* \* Then a European officer accompanied by an Indian began to drag me. I did not budge and the police began to beat me with lathis. One of them caught my private part and I reeled down. He gave me blows even on my buttocks and a few loadings into my chest.

Jagjiwan Hemchand Modi, No. 1659 of Ahmedabad states:—

\* \* \* A European Sergeant and policemen made a cordon and stopped our progress. The officer then dispensed with Press reporters and a photographer, and came back to us. He showered gross abuses on us and ordered horses to be run over us but luckily they passed by us. Then came on lathi blows \* \* \* I was lying on the ground when the officer gave me a severe blow on the back of my head; and then dragged me again a little further and gave me few lathi blows on my buttocks.

Dharasna some statements:—

Surat, June 5.

Sjt. Laxmidas Nagardas Pathak, ex-Post Master, Kathiawar and now Captain of the Kathiawar Satyagraha Dal, says:—I was marching with my batch of volunteers towards the salt pans on the 31st ultimo, when we were stopped by policemen on the way. We sat down on the road reciting "Ram nama". Thereupon, Mr. Ismail Desai came on the scene and lathi charge was ordered. Even then I would not budge an inch. So they seized me by the wrist and roughly dragged me to a considerable distance and placed me under Police guard.

The Policemen ducked me five times in water. Then they tried to forcibly thrust mud into my mouth and to sprinkle dirty salt water on my face. I was almost suffocated and was carried to the Hospital.

In the end I was threatened that I would be skinned alive, if I dared to return.

### SALT WATER IN EYES.

The statement made by Mr. Atmaram Prabha Shanker Bhatt, Volunteer, Kathiawar Satyagrahi Camp:—

On the 31st May a European Officer twisted my arm and gave me lathi blows and the Police thrust me towards a ditch and threw me in. The Policemen took off their uniform and threw me flat into deep water and ducked me about 25 times. Water entered in my stomach. They threw the dirty salt water on my face and so my eyes began to swell. I was nearly suffocated. They brought a handful of salt and thrust it forcibly in my mouth. Breathing became difficult. I was almost unconscious and so they took me to the hospital where I was washed and some medicine was administered to me which brought me to my senses. At 4 O'clock Mr. Ismail Desai came to the hospital and gave me cane strokes and dragging me by the hand threw me aside. Yet I am determined to go once more when I am better.

### REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS IN HOSPITAL.

Dahyalal J. Mehta, Volunteer No. 1763 in his statement says:—

On 31-5-1930 in the morning I reached Dharasana. We were made to sit for two hours in a Police cordon. Then the Policemen took each of us individually and began beating by lathi. I was beaten all over the body. Then came Mr. Antia and searched my pocket, confiscated my volunteers' badge and some spare cotton. I was beaten five times on the head with fists. A boy kicked me on the chest and so I fell down.

The Police then indulged in their attack partly with lathis and partly with their fists and left me unconscious in a field. When I regained consciousness, I found myself in the hospital.

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Gulab Shanabhai Patel states:—

Police began saying I was feigning only and dragged me so much so that my clothes were torn. They gave me ten or twelve lathi blows on my chest and a number of kicks with heavy shoes too. My head was not saved. Then a horse was run over me and I fell unconscious \* \* \* I vomitted blood and my back too has been bleeding. I can yet sit. My private parts are also injured by over pressing.

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Vaman Mukadam ex M. L. C. Leader of the Panchmahal batch made the following statement at the Untdi Camp Hospital: "One European officer came running no sooner we reached the field. He came to me as I was at the front and asked me whether I was Vaman Mukadam. I replied in the affirmative. Then he said, 'You coward, you are solely responsible for all these people.' I kept quiet. Mr. Antia then said in Gujarati, 'you all have come to take salt' I said, 'yes.' Then the European officer looked to everybody and asked me to tell one Ahmedabad volunteer



with beard that he was old and he should go away." I replied "they are all given proper instructions." The European said, "I ask you to tell them in my presence." I explained to the volunteers in Gujarati what the officer had told me. The volunteer told him boldly that his advice will be taken into consideration next time. Then that very officer told me to go and sit in the front and said "you have to sit here as long as you are not beaten." Then he said, "I have to tell you something, Mukadam, come here." I went to him. He roughly held me by the neck and gave me pushes. I was then told that I was under arrest. I was being marched towards the village along with other volunteers. After we moved a few spaces, the officer suddenly turned round and roughly gave me push and took me in the other direction. The officer gave me blows of fist and abused me grossly in the most filthy language. I was taken to a cabin and handed over to a police whom the officer said, "here is your old friend, you deal with him" keeping me on the verndah in custody of the police, the European went back to disperse the crowd standing a little further. I was detained there for a few minutes and the European returned in company of police and Mr. Antia and other police officers. I remember the Magistrate was also there. Here this European abused me to his heart's content. Mr. Antia took away from my pocket my badge and the European took out all the things from my pocket, my spectacles and papers were given back to me. Mr. Antia took the badge and my penknife was taken by the same European. There one after another different types of abuses were showered upon me by the European. Then he said, "you go away, we don't want you." The European told me, "you feel my stick." I refused to hold it. Then he said, you, don't feel it, well it feels like this" and struck it on my buttocks. Then he said, "you people are thieves, rouges, rascals, we have decided to tear you to pieces. You must pack off by the two o'clock train, or you will be

hammered bitterly." Saying this he gave another cane on the thigh, then I was pushed away and he said, "go away straight." I feel pain in the chest, owing to jerks and pushes given to me when I was taken to the cabin after arrest."

Kanti Parekh, Captain of the Ant Camp states:—

"I with my batch raided the Depot to-day. The Police cordon blocked our way and I with others sat down. The process of formal warning etc. being over, lathi charge commenced. Three Policemen pounced upon me like hungry wolves. They gave me innumerable blows on my legs and back and dragged me to a fairly good distance. I was lying there with my back upwards, in the mean time Mr. Ismail Desai and a European came and gave me thrashing on my hands and buttocks so much so that I cannot even sit properly, my fingers cannot give me any work as that part of the hand was much damaged, my legs too are pretty much injured and I am unable to walk. \* \* \* I had not less than fifty blows."

Hemraj Ambaram (Volunteer No. 111 from Kaira states:—

"I was amongst those who raided the Salt Depot yesterday. When I refused to move inspite of the notice given, a Policeman gave me a sound kick on my chest and my ribs were severely hurt. Yet I made an attempt to get up when I received four blows on the back, and two each on my shoulders and palms. Then they tried my secret part and poaded it with lathi. I protected the part with my hand and as a result received two blows on the hands, my palms are swollen. I also received a severe blow on the forehead and consequently I reeled and fell down. Then kicks with heavy shoes came down on my chest. When I fell down, my throat was also throttled which made me unconscious. \* \* + I have severe pain in my stomach

and chest. I breathe or can drink water with difficulty. Though it is now 24 hours since I received thrashing, I *just passed blood in urine*. I cannot even eat properly."

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Motibhai Kalidas of Ahmedabad states:

"\* \* \* I was standing near the Camp hospital near Untdi at about 8-30 A. M. on 3rd June. I saw people running about and immediately two mounted Sowars, a European Sergeant and a Pathan came up galloping at full speed. As I was trying to step over the opposite verandah, the Sergeant raised his lathi, but before it struck me I had fallen down. The horse ran over me and a hoof fell on my chest. I have severe pain in the chest. I became unconscious on regaining consciousness, I learn I remained so far over two hours and was getting convulsions."

Sgt. Dinker Mehta, the Captain of the batch of the day of the last raid states:

\* + \* Bugles were blown as soon as they saw our batch approaching. They immediately made a cordon. They stopped me, as I was in the forefront, proceeding by holding a lathi horizontally; but I tried to push through and they knocked me down by twisting a lathi under my knees. I again got up and was given several blows very forcefully, one on my lips, one on chin, one on the right eye. My spectacles were broken and the wound caused by lathi just over the right eye was bleeding. \* \* I could not see for a time as my right eye was full of blood and spectacles were broken. I however, tried again and again to proceed towards the Depot and they on their part went on with lathi charge.

The officers then threatened us that horses will be run over us. I again got 5 or 6 blows with force. "This man is here from 13th, thrash him outright"—cried some one—and seven or eight blows again came down on me. Some one again ordered a Halt and I was dragged a little farther. But then again the brute force tried to assert

itself and lathi blows, kicks and abuses were lavished on me. They then caught me by two legs and dragged me almost on my head and threw me at a distance. It is very difficult to breathe as the ribs are badly damaged."

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Dawoodbhai Abdul Rashid Khandesh states:—

× × × The Police first slapped everybody of our party on the face and gave blows with fist. The officer then gave me very indecent and gross abuse. × × Then they gave me with a heavy lathi with an iron knot—at least ten blows on my abdomen and chest, not less than five of which were given on the secret part. As I tried to get up, again 3 lathi blows were given to me on my right leg. A Sergeant then dragged me caning me all the way. As a result my testicles are swollen and there is an inflammation near lever too.



